

Poet Lore

VOLUME XIX

AUTUMN 1908

NUMBER III

PHANTASMS*

(A drama in four acts)

BY ROBERT BRACCO

Translated by Dirce St. Cyr.

CHARACTERS

PROFESSOR RAYMOND ARTUNNI.†	SISTER ELISABETH.
JULIA, his wife.	AN OLD WOMAN.
MADAME MARNIERI.	MANLIO.
LUCIANO, her son.	ROBERT.
MADAME GILBERTA MIRELLI.	ALMERICO.
THE MARCHIONESS ANTONUCCI.	PAOLO.
ADALGISA.	ERNEST.
DONNA SOPHIA.	SEVERAL OTHER DISCIPLES.
FAUSTINA.	JOSEPH, the Professor's old servant.

† Professor Raymond Artunni is a man about forty-five — Julia, his wife, is about twenty-eight.

NOTICE for the actor who has to interpret the part of RAYMOND ARTUNNI.

The actor should not keep strictly to the pathological side of the character. It is a nervous kind of consumption which makes the invalid very agitated, impetuous, and vivacious. Therefore he has almost no cough, no asthma, excepting in some rare moments, when extremely tired out; consequently the actor must often speak frenetically, vehemently, effectively, and often his words should be delivered very emphatically.

For my part, as author, I regard this kind of consumption more as a moral illness than a physical one. It is almost the 'Symbol of Jealousy.'

ROBERTO BRACCO

*Published in Rome, December 1 and 16, 1908. Privilege of Copyright in the United States reserved, under the Act approved March 3, 1905, by Roberto Bracco Copyright 1907 and 1908 by Dirce St. Cyr.

Copyright 1908 by The Poet Lore Company

ACT I

A parlor in DOCTOR RAYMOND ARTUNNI'S country house. The room is furnished with austere elegance, almost as solemn as an ancient house. It seems almost like a room in an ancient castle. The furniture also gives you that impression. On the right side there is a table, on which stands a vase containing a few flowers, some books, a hand-bell. Near the table an arm-chair covered with dark leather. Up stage center, the general entrance, opening into a small parlor. On the right side of this door, a window, opening on the garden a door, on both sides, left and right.

SCENE I

The old servant JOSEPH, MANLIO, LUCIANO

Joseph (looking quite worried).— Please be seated. As I said before, I am afraid I shall not be able to announce you to the doctor.

Manlio.— If the Doctor cannot see us, then do announce us to his wife.

Joseph.— I shall do so. Whom shall I announce?

Manlio.— What? (*Pointing to LUCIANO.*) Have you even forgotten Mr. Luciano Marnieri?

Joseph.— No, I do remember him.

Manlio.— Then his name is sufficient. I shall remain in obscurity.

Luciano.— But I beg your pardon, why do you send in my name?

Manlio (mockingly).— Good gracious! 'Why do you send in my name?' You have always been his favorite assistant, of course then he will not refuse to see us.

Luciano.— I came here with you to please my companions, not on my own account.

Manlio.— What does that mean?

Luciano.— I know what it means!

Manlio (quickly to the servant).— All right. Please tell the Doctor Artunni that 'two pupils of his wish to see him.' Nothing else.

Joseph (slowly goes to the door on the left, opens it with caution, and immediately closes it after him. Exit.)

Luciano (to Manlio).— I think it is useless to speak to her. Let us go and try again some other time.

Manlio.— Go now, after announcing ourselves? You must be crazy! It would be very impolite.

Luciano (making a gesture as if yielding).

Joseph (entering again).— Mrs. Artunni will see you in a few minutes. *(Slowly exit from the center door.)*

Manlio.— That poor old man is suffering from hypochondria! The air of the country does not agree with him. Have you noticed that every one around here looks so sad? What's the trouble with all the people?

Luciano (in a dreamy way, approaches the window, and contemplates the view.)

Manlio.— Did you not notice also that pretty country woman, down in the garden, who looked so healthy, yet so sad? She was lying down on the straw, holding the tail of a pig that wanted to run away. She looked like Ariadne at the moment when Theseus was abandoning her. When I said to her: 'Hello, my pretty girl, is this Dr. Artunni's house?' Her answer, 'Yes sir,' was so sad that it made me shiver. In order to see her smile, I asked her name. You know how all the country girls are pleased when you ask them their names? But she was not. In the same sorrowful manner she said 'Caroline.' *(Pause).* What are you looking so attentively at?

Luciano.— Nothing.

Manlio.— Do you see our companions?

Luciano (in an absent-minded way).— No. *(Stepping aside in order to let MANLIO look out from the window.)*

Manlio.— Yes, we can see them! There they are sitting on the grass like pasturing sheep! Did you hear what Robert promised us? . . . If he fails to find a four-leaf clover, he will invite all of us to lunch. I'll wager we won't. That boy is so lucky that no doubt he will find a five-leaf one instead! I must tell you. . . .

(Enter JULIA from left, immediately closing the door after her with caution.)

SCENE II

MANLIO, LUCIANO, JULIA

Luciano (who was looking at that side, seeing JULIA enter, immediately pulls MANLIO's coat to stop him. Timidly, bowing respectfully).— Madame—

Manlio (turning quickly, also bowing low, but in a vivacious manner).— Mrs. Artunni.

Julia (bowing just a little coolly).— What can I do for you?

Manlio.— You have of course recognized our illustrious Doctor

Luciano Marnieri (*to LUCIANO*). Why don't you thank me for calling you illustrious? (*To JULIA*.) For a year he was the right hand of your husband, and of course you were obliged to bear his company for a year. But I am sure you have forgotten the name and the face of this tattler (*pointing to himself*).

Julia (seriously).—Not the face, but you must excuse me if I don't remember all the names of my husband's pupils.

Manlio (introducing himself).—Manlio Andenzi, doctor of medicine, who was graduated years ago, and I believe for life.

Luciano.—Don't annoy madame with your jokes, but tell her the object of our visit.

Manlio.—Why don't you speak?

Luciano (interrupting him).—Manlio, I beg of you?

Manlio.—Of course it would be useless! I am the orator, and I hope Mrs. Artunni will forgive my good humor, because, you see, to-day is a holiday for us! You must have understood, Madame,—we are here to see the doctor. And there are quite a few of us. We two represent the vanguard, the whole regiment is outside—pasturing—we have only to give the signal, and in a body they will attack the castle. Our first idea was to come all together and surprise him. Then we changed our minds, and decided to be more prudent. We reasoned thus: 'The doctor, after all, is away in the country with his wife, to enjoy these beautiful spring days, therefore we must not be too indiscreet.' I am not joking now, I am quite serious. We, his pupils, all know how the Doctor Artunni adores you. Is it not strange that such a serious, austere man as he is could yet be so timid and try to dissimulate his love for you like a young boy out of school? Perhaps it was this very ingenuity that won our devotion entirely (*trying to joke again*). All this, of course, is all right, but because he adores his wife we should not be deprived of him. Why did he abandon us? Why did he leave his chair in the university? Why did he leave his pupils, as he used to call us? What for? Only to come over here and bury himself in the country? To do what? Play the—farmer?

Luciano (severely).—Manlio!

Manlio.—Let me talk. It is better that I should unburden myself before we see him, especially as I have the pleasure of speaking to Madame Artunni, who, I am sure, will help us out. (*To JULIA seriously*.) A noble woman like you must feel very 'sorry that a genius like your husband should give up his mission. Am I not right in hoping that you will influence him to return to us?

Julia (with her back turned, she has been listening to the light and serious

talk of MANLIO trying to control her emotion, but at his last words she decided to break the silence).— I see that you and your companions do not know anything about him.

Luciano (noticing her emotion).— What?

Manlio.— You scare us!

Julia.— Poor Raymond is so ill that, even if he would, he could never go back to you.

Luciano (becoming very pale).

Manlio (astonished).— When did he become ill?

Julia.— I don't know! He hid it for a long time, even from me. I believe he never told any one of it in order to keep me in total ignorance of it. Only a year ago, before deciding to retire to this old country house, he told me he had incurable tuberculosis. You remember for a month he never went out. When you called on him he would try to be gay. And if some one noticed that he was getting tired, he would immediately reassure him it was only overwork. But just after this he told me the truth. And now every day repeats it to me that there is no hope.

Luciano (trying to control his emotion).

(Pause)

Manlio.— I am sure there must be some exaggeration. You are so devoted to him that, unwittingly, you are exaggerating, or unconsciously encouraging his exaggeration. And he — yes, it is true — is one of our best physicians, yet he is so nervous, so suggestive — But how can he have the same perception, when it regards himself?

Julia.— Yet he examines and studies himself in such an exacting manner that it would frighten you.

Manlio.— But the necessary calm for taking care of himself —

Julia.— The intense desire to prolong his life is worth more to him than calm.

Manlio.— Yet we should ask the advice of some specialists. We should have a consultation — I don't know — But we should do something. Shouldn't we, Luciano? Yes, we must.

Luciano (looking aghast, cannot utter a word).

Julia.— I begged him so much to do so.

Manlio.— We shall impose upon him the advice of his best colleagues.

Julia.— You shall see he will not listen to them, at any rate, there is no more hope now.

Manlio.— Can you believe it, Luciano? Can you? And all of us came here to scold him, but to express our everlasting enthusiasm. (To

JULIA). Do tell us, Mrs. Artunni, will he be able to see us? We should like to present our respects, see him, but if you fear or if you think it is not the proper moment —

Julia.— I should think he would be pleased to see his pupils. At all events it would help him morally.

Manlio.— Is he in bed?

Julia.— At this moment he is asleep, because he had a restless night. Generally he is either shut up in his studio working, or he goes around the house, in an active, agitated, but energetic manner, that to look at him, one would not believe his condition so grave. It is a remarkable phenomenon.

Manlio.— Why a remarkable phenomenon? I maintain, instead, that if he is able to expend so much vitality, there is not so much danger as he thinks.

Julia.— I don't know!

Manlio.— We are going back to tell everything to our companions. They will indeed be sorry! In half an hour we shall all return. Then, if he cannot see us, we shall come back some other time. After you have told him that we are here, you shall yourself decide what we must do. We are entirely at your disposal, and you must rely upon us as if we were — may I say it — brothers—

Julia.— I thank you.

Manlio.— Please do go now, he might be awake.

Julia.— No, if he were awake, he would certainly have called me.

(Taking leave).— Will you excuse me.

Manlio.— We shall see you soon.

Luciano (*bowing without looking at her, and without being able to pronounce a word*).

Julia (*exits from left door, being careful to open and close it without making any noise*).

SCENE III

MANLIO, LUCIANO

Manlio (*putting his hand on his forehead*).— I feel as if I were dreaming! We had no warning! Absolutely no warning! (*With a hopeless gesture*.) But it is so! We cannot doubt it any more! Let us go, Luciano.

Luciano (*trying to control his deep emotion*).— Yes, Manlio (*takes a few steps, then suddenly stops*).

Manlio.— Well?

Luciano.— Wait a moment. Let me compose myself a little. That news has——

Manlio.— I know perfectly how you feel about it. He was very kind to you (*both deeply moved*).

Luciano.— Don't you think it would be better to tell our companions not to disturb that poor unfortunate?

Manlio.— But his wife said that perhaps our visit might be of some assistance to him.

Luciano.— What! To almost oblige him to see him? To almost make him own up that there is no more hope, that he has only a few months, a few days to live? It would indeed be cruel!

Manlio.— Excuse me, but why did you not express your opinion a few minutes ago, when his wife was here? Instead, you did not say a word, not even to express your sympathy ——

Luciano.— I was so upset ——

Manlio.— Now, my boy, we can't retract! Courage, Luciano, don't let us lose any more time! All our companions are acting as schoolboys on a holiday, adorning themselves with flowers, not knowing anything, they come here in a kind of procession so as to surprise us. Their gaiety would indeed be out of place now.

Luciano.— But remember I shall not come back with all of you.

Manlio.— More reason, then, to go away at once.

Luciano.— Yet I should like — at least to justify myself with his wife.

Manlio.— Let me tell you frankly you have made a very stupid resolution.

Luciano.— Manlio, I have not the courage to see him so ill. I haven't the courage to remain here to look and listen to him, thinking that shortly he will go.

Manlio.— This sensitiveness of yours borders upon weakness.

Luciano (*quickly, yet submissively*).— No, no! Manlio! It is not weakness! No, but only a matter of conscience!

Manlio (*surprised*).— Conscience!

Luciano.— The worst part of it is that though I feel I should not venture to see him, because I know I shall not have the courage to face him, yet a supernatural force keeps me here, body and soul, and I feel absolutely compelled to speak to him, to throw myself at his feet.

Manlio (*more surprised*).— The reason?

Luciano.— I don't know ——

Manlio.— You don't know it?

(*Pause*)

Luciano (stretching out his arm, nervously).— Manlio!

Manlio (frightened).— Luciano?

Luciano (in a low voice, trembling).— You always believed me a good man, did you not?

Manlio.— The best of men.

Luciano.— And if I were a scoundrel instead?

Manlio.— Don't say foolish things! There is no relation between your words and the actual facts.

Luciano (approaching him, almost touching MANLIO's face, much excited).— Do you wish to know the true meaning of my words? Will you be shocked? Will you despise me?

Manlio.— Be calm. Remember where we are.

Luciano (going on talking, frantically, but with stifling voice).— When Mrs. Artunni told us of her husband's mortal sickness, a brutally selfish thought flashed into my mind.

Manlio.— What are you raving about?

Luciano.— For a long time I have been fighting against a hopeless passion, and at that moment I felt its cupidity.

Manlio (astonished).— Are you in love with her?

Luciano.— Yes, yes! And I thought that perhaps — his death — would have permitted —

Manlio (interrupting him, and putting his hand in front of his mouth so as to stop him).— No! I don't want to listen to you! (*Then almost trembling.*) And Mrs. Artunni?

Luciano (quickly, emphatically).— Nothing! Nothing! Never a word, never a look of encouragement.

Manlio.— Then you have lost all your good sense.

Luciano.— All this is a mystery to me also. I spent my first youth finding pleasure only in my thoughts, never thinking about women. When I met her I felt like a blind man who sees the light for the first time. And since that time I have lived like one possessed. I cannot say anything more.

Manlio.— And now — you wished to justify yourself, so that she may guess?

Luciano (covering his face with both hands).— To have become a scoundrel to such a point, no! If I had not been so disgusted with myself, do you think I should have had the impulse to tell you?

Manlio.— Now, you shall go with me. And in order not to let him suspect anything, you shall come back with us. You shall fulfil your duty to the last. We will think about the future, later on. You must go far away from this house, from this city, to a strange country, so you will overcome all the dangers.

Luciano (firmly).— I swear to you I shall do what you say!

Manlio (a little frightened).— I hear her voice! Quick! If she met you now I should be afraid that your emotion might betray you.

Luciano.— Don't help to make me lose faith in my honesty!

Manlio (quickly taking his arm).— Come with me! Come!

Luciano.— Yes, yes!

(Both exit center door, MANLIO pushing LUCIANO. The conversation from 'Now, you shall go with me,' till 'Yes, yes,' must be delivered very quickly.)

(The scene remains empty for a second)

SCENE IV

JULIA, RAYMOND, JOSEPH

Julia (enters from left, quickly, as if she were looking for a refuge).— It is absolute torture! Absolute torture! *(Crying, but without tears.)*

(A silence)

Raymond (enters from left, pale, agitated, stops and holds himself to a chair).

Julia (seeing him, stops crying, and looks at him).

(Another silence)

Raymond (calmly).— You ran away?

Julia (gently nods her head).

Raymond.— You came here to cry?

Julia.— Yes — it is true, I wanted to cry.

Raymond.— Why?

Julia.— Because *(sweetly)* — in your words, in your looks, there is always that same suspicion! You wake up with the same thoughts with which you go to sleep. Always questioning, searching, and looking at me in that strange manner. Does it surprise you that sometimes I feel like crying?

Raymond.— There is no reason why you should hide, though.

Julia.— I am hiding only my tears from you.

Raymond.— Even if I don't see them I know I am tormenting you.
(Pause.) Poor woman! How I make you suffer!

Julia.— No, I am only grieved at your suffering.

Raymond.— But does not this terrible inquisition to which I expose you make you suffer?

Julia.— Yes, but the worst part is that this inquisition of yours makes me so nervous that I am unable to nurse you, with that serenity of mind which is so necessary.

(*Pause*)

Raymond.— And I know it will be so till the end! Now that I feel the catastrophe approaching I had made up my mind to remain quiet, and spare you this horrible ordeal. I wanted to give you the illusion that I was free from the terrible clutches of this untamable jealousy. This illusion would not only have been beneficial to you, but also would have spared me this agonized suffering. You would have alleviated my last moments with your sincere kindness, whereas now you will feel bitterly towards me. Not even the assurance of the benefit I was expecting from my little deceitfulness has had the power to cure me of this frenzy. The nearer the end approaches, the worse my suspicion becomes. I shall torment you, Julia, to the last, and when the fatal moment arrives and I ask your indulgence, your pity, you will be right then if you curse me.

Julia.— No, dearest; if you have made me suffer, it was because you loved me too much, therefore all my life I shall pity you.

Raymond.— For the sake of that pity don't oppose my foolish need of searching into your soul, because this horrible thirst of inquisition is consuming me more than the consumption. Anyhow, there is no more hope of curing my jealousy. I was jealous of you the very first day I married you, when you were only an innocent girl. During these ten years of our union you have been the most affectionate, patient, perfect wife, nevertheless I never ceased to be jealous of you. I have oppressed you, watched you, and sometimes even kept you like a prisoner. Did I believe you capable of deceiving me? No. Had I perhaps some suspicion? No! No! I assure you no! But the really jealous man, Julia, does not wait for denunciation, for calumny, or for any other proof of treason to feel the necessity of mistrusting the woman whom he loves. Whoever believes that a mere suspicion may arouse jealousy does not indeed know this horrible disease. Jealousy starts in the hearts of those who have the instinct for it, and it comes about the same time as love! And then it becomes tyrannical, monstrous, unbounded, especially if it is a true, deep love.

Julia.— But should not ten years of faithfulness put an end to your suspicions?

Raymond.— You saw me — saw your mother's doctor and benefactor. When she died, you married me, because I wanted to save you from all the dangers and poverty. I recognize your faithfulness, but it came through gratitude, which sentiment resembles love least. Tell me, do you know precisely how unfaithfulness starts? It begins by surrendering, by falling, by abandoning our body entirely, and by feeling the weight of our sacrifice. It begins by the brutal infraction of our duty or by our inner perturbation, which often will not hear even the cry of our conscience. You don't know all this, and even if you knew it, you would perhaps prefer not to say it. But what is annoying me now is not the past nor the present. While I live, you will not deceive me. That's settled. But — after?

Julia (surprised and frightened).— What are you thinking now?

Raymond (much agitated).— After? After? This is a new torment worse than the one I had to bear during these ten years. The vision of death has imposed upon me a new fear, which will make me suffer agony to the end.

Julia (energetically, yet sadly, interrupting him).— For Heaven's sake, Raymond, try to overcome this new idea, or both of us will become insane.

Raymond (approaching her, quite agitated).— How can I overcome this, when whatever you may assure me makes no material effect upon me, as we do not control our future?

Julia.— You never suspected I would lie to you. Never! Never! From the very first day of our union we excluded the probability of lying to each other, and the sincere exchange of our thoughts has been and still is the refuge of our souls, the only comfort of our poor unhappy home.

Raymond.— But what comfort will I find in your sincerity of yesterday? And that of to-day? You say now you are mine for Eternity? I'll admit it, I'll believe it, I will not doubt that to-day you cannot understand not being just as much bound to my memory after my death as you have been to me during my life? But may not a change or transformation take place in your heart some day? May not some temptations, which you will have to face after my death have an influence over you?

Julia.— For those who do not look for temptations there are none.

Raymond.— You will not be tempted, will you?

Julia.— Never, Raymond!

Raymond.— But temptation will follow you, and perhaps prevent you from being strong. In order to resist the world's temptation one should be blind, deaf, you should not possess a woman's sensibility, you should not have any nerves, nor any blood — Oh! How lonely I see you in this terrible struggle! Already I can imagine myself looking at you from my tomb.

(*Pressing his chest as if almost wishing to tear it to pieces.*) How I am suffering! What pain I have here!

Julia (*desperately*).— Oh, Raymond, dearest, stop raving like this.

Raymond (*excited*).— I would sell my soul if that gave me the assurance of never being deceived. (*Sits in an armchair quite exhausted.*)

Julia (*sitting also, quite discouraged*).— Dear me! Dear me!

(*A long silence*)

Joseph (*enters from center, and stops on the threshold, and calls softly*).— Madame! (*Pause. Then a little louder.*) Madame!

Julia (*turning to him*).— Well, Joseph?

Joseph (*advancing a little, JULIA going to him.*)

Joseph (*in a low voice*).— Those two gentlemen who came here this morning are back with their friends.

Julia (*hesitating and speaking in a low voice*).— I don't know how it —

Joseph.— I shall tell them to wait a while.

Julia.— Yes, Joseph, ask them to wait.

(*JOSEPH exit*)

Raymond (*who has seen JULIA talking with JOSEPH, but has not heard the conversation, asks abruptly*).— What did Joseph want?

Julia.— Your pupils — as I told you — had expressed the desire to pay you their respects. They are outside, waiting for an answer.

Raymond (*firmly*).— I shall not receive them. (*Pause.*) Their presence here in my house would — humiliate me more. It seems to me it is a bad omen. (*With tears in his eyes.*) They, like you, will outlive me —

Julia.— They love you.

Raymond.— No matter! They have all the enthusiasm of their youth, which to my eyes is the most attractive thing, but now has become my enemy! Yes, Julia, it will be youth which will tempt you and put you to the test. Youth loves and is loved (*crying*).

Julia.— Raymond! (*Embracing, kissing him and crying with him.*) Raymond!

Raymond.— Yes, kiss me, embrace me — cry with me. It helps me. (*Drying his eyes.*) You see it is better that you cry without hiding your tears? I'll become more sensible. For instance, now, I must not be so hard on those poor boys. Not only shall I welcome them, but I shall entertain them with many interesting subjects which I have intended to communicate to them for some time.

Julia (*going towards center door*).

*Raymond (seeing her go suddenly stops her).—*No, not you. I shall ask Joseph to show them in.

Julia (stops).

Raymond (rings the bell, which is on the table).

*Joseph (appearing again, and remaining on the threshold).—*I am here, sir.

(Pause)

*Raymond (to JULIA, timidly, as he fears to be understood).—*Are you not going to your room?

*Julia (timidly).—*Yes, Raymond. *(Going.)*

*Raymond.—*And are you going like that?

Julia (approaching him again, kisses his forehead, and then slowly exit through the door on the left.)

*Raymond (follows her with the corner of his eyes, then turning to JOSEPH, and trying to be calm, says).—*Joseph — tell those young men they may come in.

(JOSEPH exit center)

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE I

RAYMOND AND HIS DISCIPLES

(RAYMOND is still seated in an armchair near the table. All his disciples, about a dozen of them, are standing in front of him. LUCIANO, who remains apart from the others, pale, embarrassed, and hardly glances at RAYMOND. All the others look solemn and sad, but they give the impression of being intensely interested in what RAYMOND has just told them. Their solemnity is in contrast with their gay spring suits. They all wear flowers in their buttonholes, and some of them even have some grass sticking out of their pockets.)

Raymond (must give the impression that he has been talking vivaciously, and has suddenly stopped to take breath).

All the others (remain in silence, hoping he will continue).

*Raymond.—*Give me a few moments of rest.

Paul (kindly).— Doctor, you should not speak so much, it will hurt you.

Raymond.— I assure you no.

Robert (aside to the others).— It is so close here that he can hardly breathe. There are too many of us in the room.

Almerico.— Shall we open the window?

Raymond.— Yes, open it. Let me also enjoy this beautiful spring day. (*Looking at them.*) I see you have adorned yourselves with spring flowers. (*One of the disciples goes to open the window.*)

(*A brief silence*)

Raymond (breathing the fresh air, and at last feeling well again, goes on talking).— I was telling you that by my will I make you my heirs —

Manlio (daring to interrupt him).— But why speak of these things to-day? You are still energetic. There's so much life in you yet! One can see by your looks that your energy will not be exhausted either to-morrow or in a month or in a year!

Raymond.— My dear Manlio, I am afraid the end is coming soon. I know it. To-day must be our farewell. To-day, when I still enjoy the full power of my reasonings, must dispose of my little scientific treasure. Perhaps I could not do it to-morrow. There (*pointing to the right door*), in my studio, you will find on the desk a very large manuscript. Bring it here.

Manlio.— All right (*slowly goes out from the right door, and immediately returns with the manuscript, which he hands to the professor in a very respectful way, then returns to his place.*)

Raymond (showing it to his disciples).— Here it is (*putting it on the table*). Boys, listen to me. Not often has a doctor the privilege of studying in himself one of the most serious illnesses which afflicts our humanity. I have therefore taken advantage of this opportunity and made many important discoveries. No man ever felt the necessity of prolonging his life as I do, and no man ever delayed its end with so much animosity as I did. I owe to this animosity all the precious researches which I have been able to make, and the discovery of tried remedies. For a long time I was able to conquer the illness which was constantly attacking me in different ways, But I tell you truly, if I had not had to fight against its continual violence, my victory would have been complete. (*A brief silence.*) In this manuscript, which I confide to you, is the fruit of all my strange studies (*sadly*) that I made on my poor, ruined body, hoping it will be the means of curing a thousand others. You who are young, vigorous, talented, devoted, will you assume the task of utilizing my inheritance to the profit of those that suffer? (*Waiting for an answer.*) No one answers? Ah, this grieves me.

Manlio.— This silence, professor, is only caused by our devotion to you. I am only a poor fool, who dared to call himself 'your disciple.' All my companions think the same. The great love we feel for you does not admit, nor will admit, that you are going to abandon us forever. You speak to us with the same serenity with which our dearest dead would talk to us from a distant world. But we are near you, looking and listening to a man whose perfect vitality we still admire, therefore we cannot believe that we shall soon separate from each other. No doubt every word you uttered becomes instantly our best thought and we feel as if something really yours was diffusing in us. This is our answer, professor. (*All are quite moved, and some even control their tears. MANLIO dries a tear with his handkerchief.*)

Luciano (*more agitated than the others, tries to hide himself behind his companions.*)

Raymond.— No, boys, don't. If you only knew the effort I am making, now, so as to accomplish for the last time my mission, if you could understand the prodigy I am achieving, so as not to hear the wails of the hurricane raging over the remains of my existence, you would not shed any tears. No, I am not asking tears from my disciples, but a solemn promise given by honest men who stick to their duty and to me.

Paul.— Yes, professor; we do promise it.

Ernest.— We promise we shall be worthy of your confidence.

Robert.— In your name we shall be proud to help humanity.

Raymond.— And — you will not refuse me, I hope, a little gratitude——

Robert.— Our most profound gratitude, an eternal gratitude——

Raymond.— Will you go on loving me, just the same as if I were with you, still alive, and much devoted to all of you? You will still go on respecting me, won't you?

Robert.— To veneration, professor!

Raymond.— All of you? All? (*Looking at them.*)

The disciples. (*All answering solemnly and sincerely.*)— All of us! (*Only LUCIANO has not answered, he seems paralyzed.*)

Raymond.— (*Rises slowly, and then, as if acting by inspiration, approaches one by one his disciples, and looks at them in silence.*)

(*Luciano is the last of the disciples, and he is obliged to look straight into the professor's eyes.*)

Raymond (*with a certain presentiment, murmurs to himself.*)— Yet — who knows!

Robert (*sadly.*)— Are you doubting us, professor?

Raymond.— Why should I doubt you? I find in you only kindness.

Robert.— Then?

Raymond.— I was only thinking that human kindness is, after all, a very limited thing, compared with the demands that one man makes upon another. (*Sitting again.*) But all this should not worry you, I rely on your promise, and when the day comes (*pointing to LUCIANO*) you shall receive a copy of my work. Our friendship will be strengthened by this fact which will keep us united, even when I shall be gone. Now it only remains to make our farewells.

Manlio.— But we, professor, wish to help you, to cure you. We shall not give that up! If it annoys you to have so many people all at once around you, we shall take our turns, each hour ——

Ernest.— Yes, and we shall not disturb you.

Raymond.— I appreciate your offer, but do permit me not to accept it. My wife is so attentive, so vigilant, that any other assistance would be superfluous.

Ernest.— Perhaps our help will not be superfluous to her.

Robert.— The presence of some one who cares for you might give her more courage. Manlio and Luciano, who preceded us, said that they found her suffering and quite tired. Induce him, Luciano, you who always have been so intimate with the doctor, to accept our offer.

Luciano (*obliged to speak against his will, and almost without understanding what he is saying*).— It seems to me — that if the professor does not ——

Raymond.— At last I hear your voice, Luciano! You've not spoken a word, you have been hiding yourself.

Manlio (*interrupting quickly*).— Because he was much more upset than we. He had for a year been working by your side, participating in all your anxieties and being treated like a son. Naturally, the news of your illness was a shock to him, and he is quite desolate.

Raymond.— Come here, Luciano, let me embrace you.

Luciano (*approaching him with downcast eyes*).

Raymond (*rises and embraces him. Then drawing back, says sadly*).— I did not quite feel your embrace! (*Sits again.*) I must confess, I was a little hurt when you discouraged your companions when they were offering me their assistance.

Luciano.— Because I knew no one could make you change your plans.

Manlio.— He thought it necessary to favor your wishes, you don't believe that ——

Raymond (*interrupting him*).— Don't trouble yourself to defend him. I know him better than you do. It is because I know that he loves me that I am astonished he did not feel the need of coming to my assistance now.

Luciano.— This last hour, doctor, I have not been responsible for my actions.

Raymond.— If I were to judge from your expression, I should think you were cross with me.

Luciano.— I cross with you? It would be horrible! You who opened the door of Science to me. You who taught me to be good to myself and to others, you who taught me to be honest!

Raymond.— And moreover I taught you to be loyal.

Luciano (*starting, but has not the strength to go on*).

Raymond.— You see, you have not been loyal to me?

(*A brief silence*)

Manlio (*worried, looks at them, fearing that LUCIANO will give way*).

Raymond (*to LUCIANO*).— I don't doubt your sorrow, yet there must be something abnormal agitating you.

Luciano.— No, Professor.

Raymond.— Don't deny it, because even if you were a master in the art of 'feinting,' you could never compete with my clairvoyance. Sometimes it frightens me! It is like a sudden light which might at any time discover to my eyes the abyss which will swallow me.

Luciano (*nervously*).— Even if something abnormal was agitating me, that would not mean that my affection is at fault.

Raymond.— No.

Luciano.— But I shall show you that I still deserve your esteem, your advice, your protection. I shall surround you with all the cares, so that your sufferings will be alleviated. My sincere devotion will prove to you that you were mistaken!

Raymond (*coldly, meditatively, mistrustfully*).— Listen to me, Luciano. Your kind words are sufficient for me, yet don't be offended, I shall refuse your assistance, as I have refused that of your companions. But in order to see you happy again, I shall give you, before them all, a proof of my esteem and affection. I should have done it before, had your behavior not prevented me. (*Rises solemnly.*) You are my immediate heir. This manuscript will come to you, you will have to control my investigation, perfect my studies, replace me, and guide these young men (*giving him the manuscript*). I wish you success. Take it.

Luciano (*pale, hardly being able to stand, trembling takes the manuscript and murmuring*).— I thank you.

Raymond (*looking at him attentively and seeing him tremble and not understanding his laconicism, angrily tears away the manuscript violently from LUCIANO*).— Ah! It was not in this way you should have accepted the

present, which was really transmitting you the best part of myself. (*Throwing the manuscript on the table. Then mortified, concludes sadly.*) All right, I confess — I don't understand you (*shivering*). Now it is all over, I don't want any more explanations! (*Turning his back to him, tries to speak to the others.*) Boys, I am quite tired. But before we separate, I have to ask a favor from you. Don't come back here any more (*almost crying*). Don't come back, not even — to bring flowers to my dead body.

(*All of them except LUCIANO feel hurt at the idea of never coming back to see him*).

Raymond (*slowly, as if searching for words*).— And if you really respect me, please do not seek to know the cause of my strange desire — because I — forgive me — (*quickly exit to the right, holding his head with both hands*).

SCENE II

The DISCIPLES, then JULIA, then RAYMOND

(*Some of the disciples look astonished, amazed, dismayed, others deliberately go to LUCIANO to reprimand him.*)

Robert.— Why did you act so, Luciano?

Almerico.— It is inconceivable!

Ernest.— I don't understand.

Robert.— What new whim is this?

Manlio (*intercepting*).— Gentlemen, this is not the time nor the place to find fault with Luciano.

Robert.— But it is our duty —

Manlio (*interrupting him*).— Our first duty is to go at once.

(*Enter JULIA from the left*)

(*They all stop talking and bow to her, LUCIANO tries not to look at her and hides himself.*)

Julia (*anxiously*).— Where is Raymond?

Manlio.— He took leave of us and went into his study.

Julia.— Did he feel ill?

Manlio.— No —

Julia.— I am a little worried, because I heard him talk quite loudly. Was he much excited?

Manlio.— Oh, no.

Julia (*quite worried immediately goes to his study. As soon as she enters, RAYMOND'S voice is heard outside, saying*).— Why did you not remain in your room? (*Pause.*) No, remain here now.

Paul (to the companions).— Manlio is right, we had better go at once. *(Exit. They all follow him, some in silence, some depressed, some shaking their heads, some walking slowly. MANLIO and LUCIANO are the last, and the latter all at once says aside to MANLIO.)*

Luciano.— I am afraid he suspects!

Manlio.— Not the truth.

Luciano.— Between him and me there is an irresistible magnetism which reveals each to the other.

Manlio.— It was no magnetism, he was only impressed by your morbid condition.

Luciano.— I told you I should not be able to face him.

Manlio.— As you will not see him again, don't worry.

Luciano.— But if he asks me for other explanations?

Manlio.— But did you not promise to go away?

Luciano.— Yes, I must go away! It is necessary! *(Just as they are going out RAYMOND suddenly opens the door of his study and calls.)*

Raymond.— Luciano!

(LUCIANO and MANLIO turn quickly)

Raymond.— I am glad you're still here, I was hoping so.

Manlio (stops also).

Raymond (to MANLIO).— Are you anxious lest he should remain alone with me?

Manlio.— I was only thinking ——

Raymond.— Then, Manlio, will you do me the favor to go?

Manlio (anxiously looks at LUCIANO, then bows and exit).

SCENE III

RAYMOND, LUCIANO

Raymond (almost as if afraid that LUCIANO will go, he immediately goes to the door to bar the passage. Rather rudely, but at the same time in an imploring tone says).— Luciano, unfortunately a specter has come between us, which is not only dividing us, but also keeping us in each other's thoughts. I shall not let you go now, and I know you think the same, until you have told me what you felt when you took from my hands the prize which I had reserved for you.

Luciano (facing him, but drawing away at every word that the professor says).— You were obliging me to consider the inevitable, a frightful disaster, which I will not even admit as possible. It hurt me — then — I knew — I could not fulfil the duty you were assigning me.

Raymond.— Who would have prevented you ?

Luciano.— No one. But I am going away from this city —therefore I could not have been a guide to my companions — nor could I alone have accomplished your work.

Raymond.— You are going away ?

Luciano.— Yes.

Raymond.— And not coming back ?

Luciano.— Not coming back.

Raymond.— And cut short your career, which you have begun so well ? Leave your friends ? Abandon your mother, whom you love most devotedly ?

Luciano.— If it were necessary ——

Raymond.— Has the necessity arisen from the abnormal state of mind which ——

Luciano.— No ! No ! It is an entirely different thing.

Raymond.— That is ?

Luciano (not finding a ready lie, stammers a little).

Raymond.— Don't worry, I shall not insist. (*Pause.*) When do you expect to go ?

Luciano (impulsively).— As soon as possible !

Raymond.— It is so urgent ?

Luciano.— Very.

Raymond.— Did you not a few minutes ago propose to alleviate my suffering ?

Luciano.— But you begged us never to come to your house ——

Raymond.— Has your departure become urgent, then, since I asked that favor ?

Luciano.— Call it 'urgent,' if you wish — I have decided to hasten it.

Raymond.— Why ?

Luciano.— Because my departure will guarantee you my scrupulous obedience.

Raymond.— Then I must thank you for your departure ?

Luciano.— I did not say that.

Raymond.— But it means that.

Luciano.— I did not express myself well.

Raymond.— Why should you go on account of the favor which I asked you all ?

Luciano (does not answer).

Raymond.— You don't answer. No one of your companions thought of hastening their departure, so as to guarantee me not to come to my house.

Why did such a thing come to your mind? (*Pause.*) You still persist in your silence?

Luciano (incapable of resisting any longer).— If I spoke — if I told you all, you might perhaps judge me too severely, and I don't deserve that.

Raymond.— If you believed that you were not at fault, you would not have to be afraid of being judged.

Luciano (impressed by the words begins to give a direction to his thoughts).— Sometimes there are faults which remain close in our souls and the only guilty victim is the culprit himself.

Raymond.— Yet if your fault did not concern me, you would not feel in my presence the weight of your conscience, and you would not recognize in me the right to judge you.

Luciano.— My anxiety and my instinct urge me to ask your advice; even if it were severe, it would help me, purify me.

Raymond (furiously).— What are you waiting, then, to confess to me?

Luciano.— My lips are revolting.

(*A long silence.*)

Raymond (trying to co-ordinate his ideas, facts, and words, always obeying his clairvoyance, yet mistrusting himself, reflects a little, approaching LUCIANO, mysteriously murmurs in his ear).— Shall I help you to make your confession?

Luciano (sitting exhausted).— I have no longer a will of my own. I am inert, I am yours! You can do what you like with me.

Raymond (takes a chair and sits close to LUCIANO, remaining a little behind his shoulders. Talking to him mysteriously).— When I said I would help you, I unwittingly remembered an episode which occurred last year. It was — on my wife's birthday. We were living in town, and I came here expressly in the morning to gather all the most beautiful roses I had in the garden. I only found five worthy of her, and I offered them to her. In the evening you and all the other disciples came to wish her many happy returns of the day. My wife was wearing those five roses at her belt. A few minutes before you all went away, I noticed one rose was missing. Not even for a moment did I suspect that she had given it away. I said to myself, 'It fell,' and when you all went away I searched for it everywhere, almost as if it had been a precious pearl. I could not find it. That rose had disappeared! Well then? Had it been given? No, no. I was sure of that. Therefore I concluded that one of you had picked up the rose. (*A brief pause.*) And now, please help me out by remembering if you saw one of your companions wearing that rose that same evening?

Luciano.— No — I did not see it.

Raymond (looking at him with suggestive intensity).— That means someone took it and hid it.

Luciano (impulsively defending himself).— To take and hide a rose which fell from a lady's belt had indeed no importance.

Raymond (rising quickly and triumphantly).— Ah, you are defending your cause. At last I find the clew!

Raymond.— That leads me to the solution of what I wanted to know! (*Almost without voice.*) Am I wrong when I say I fear my clairvoyance?

Luciano (humbly).— Did I offend you? It was only a foolish act, to which a man like you should not attach any importance.

Raymond (bitterly).— Tell me now the story of your love. Perhaps I shall pity you, but you understand now, I must know all.

Luciano.— Such a folly one does not tell, nor remember. What should I tell you?

Raymond.— Did you ever tell her of it?

Luciano.— Never! Though I was blind and foolish, I was afraid of my crime, and, like a guilty one, I tried to destroy its traces.

Raymond.— Are you sure you were successful?

Luciano.— My conscience assures me of that, and then her behavior——

Raymond.— But you are convinced that if she had understood she would not have remained so indifferent ——?

Luciano (interrupting him).— She would have shown me her contempt, her anger——

Raymond.— Perhaps she tried to dissimulate all that, in the same way you were dissimulating your love for her.

Luciano.— What are you saying? Your wife's virtue is a part of yourself; who insults her insults you.

Raymond.— Of course, your praising my wife's virtue does not convince me entirely. (*Resolutely.*) I shall learn from her what you refuse to say. (*Going to his study, opens the door and calls.*) Julia! Julia!

Luciano (rising frightened).— What are you going to do now?

Raymond.— Don't worry, I am not so simple as to tell her what I want to know.

SCENE IV

RAYMOND, LUCIANO, JULIA

Julia (entering hastily).— Do you need me?

Raymond (trying to control himself, so as to better study her face).— I

called you — because Luciano wants to bid you good by. He has the right to do that, he was one of my disciples who came quite often to our house, and moreover — he was an intimate friend of ours. Now he is going away, to establish himself in another place. I shall not see him any more, but *you*, who knows! The world is not as wide as we think. You may meet again.

Julia (seriously).— Good by, Mr. Luciano. (*Giving him her hand.*)

Luciano (hardly shaking it).— Good by, madame. (*Then turning to RAYMOND as if wishing to make his last farewell.*) Have you anything to say to me?

Raymond (trying to overcome his feelings).— No, Luciano.

Luciano (hesitating to go).

Julia (observing them and understanding they are hiding something from her).

Luciano.— I am going —

Raymond (in order not to make JULIA suspect, he turns to him, saying). We have already said good by, Luciano. We have embraced each other — we must not prolong our farewell.

Luciano (after a moment exit).

Julia (following him with the corner of her eyes).

SCENE V

RAYMOND, JULIA

(*A silence*)

Raymond (trying to control himself).—Are you not sorry that Luciano is going away?

Julia.— We have not seen him for a long time.

Raymond.— Yet it is rather sad to see him go without even promising to return.

Julia (shrugging her shoulders).

(*A pause*)

Raymond.— Of course, you don't know the cause of his departure?

Julia.— No.

Raymond.— And you are not curious?

Julia.— All that does not concern us, does not interest me in the least!

Raymond.— In fact his departure does not interest us in the least. He has passed an examination and has obtained an official position abroad. That is what he told me. Do you think he could deceive me?

Julia.— I don't believe so.

(*A pause.*)

Raymond.— What's your opinion of him?

Julia.— I never thought much about him. But he appears to be a very nice man.

Raymond.— He, on the other hand — spoke much of you.

Julia.— Of me?

Raymond.— Does that surprise you?

Julia.— I don't understand how he came to speak of me!

Raymond.— I told him of your devotion to me — and he — praised the nobility of your soul, your courage. That should not offend you, nor astonish you. You were good friends.

Julia.— We were good friends?

Raymond.— I suppose so.

Julia.— While he was working with you, I think we used to exchange ten words a day.

Raymond.— If I remember rightly, you seemed to enjoy each other's conversation.

Julia.— Our conversation was always together with you.

Raymond.— That's why I remember it.

Julia.— You never wished me to be alone either with that young man or with anybody else, and I always obeyed you willingly.

Raymond.— Precisely. You — never had the opportunity to ——

Julia (sadly reproaching him).— What do you mean?

Raymond.— You never had the opportunity of creating a real friendship between you two. That's what I meant. Are you sorry that I am taking your side.

Julia.— What I am sorry for is that you are torturing yourself because that young man spoke kindly about me. Did you call me for that? Indeed, you're cruel towards yourself and towards me.

Raymond.— Even this time you say I am cruel. And that's the result of excitement.

Julia.— Yes, dear Raymond. Since this morning when you learned all these young men had called to see you, you began to threaten again.

Raymond (still trying to control himself).— It is more than a threat, Julia!

Julia.— Hallucination, Raymond! Hallucination!

Raymond (quickly).— Indestructible reality! That young man confessed —

Julia (proudly).— What?

Raymond.— No! No! It is not true, it is not true — I am only inventing it — I am resorting to this subterfuge again so as to find out. You understand no one would make such a confession to a husband — and then Luciano is so taken up with his science, his ideas, and he thinks so much of me — that he could never love you.

Julia (sincerely).— And if he loved me, why should you fear? No woman would love a man simply because she knows she is loved.

Raymond (timidly).— Yet if a good man should constantly go on loving a woman, making sacrifices, would not your sublime efforts finally be in vain?

Julia.— You're asking the same questions you asked this morning.

Raymond (sincerely).— No, dearest, these are not the same questions which I asked this morning, because then it was only a shadow, now a reality. We're convinced of the existence of such a man.

Julia.— But how do you know I am also convinced of it?

Raymond.— Because when I tried to deny what imprudently had escaped me, you did not believe I had lied to you before. That meant you were sure of being loved. Therefore I do not attach much importance to my questions. But in order that you may be sure of your answers, let me tell you that Luciano has a beautiful soul. He fought very hard before he permitted me to let him confess his love to you. The reason of his departure, which is going to ruin his career, is because he felt his duty towards me and you to run away. And now that you know what he is capable of, can you still rely on your strength, that is, not to be tempted by his admirable, constant love?

Julia.— Yes, Raymond. What I feel for that man is just like what I feel for the others, indifference. If cruel 'Fate' wants me to outlive you, I will defend myself! But why speak of these horrible things!

Raymond.— Tell me, please, what you will do if you outlive me?

Julia.— I may retire somewhere. I don't know. I may do some good, open a home; help some poor women who have remained alone in the world, especially those who, like me, have no ambition, those whose souls are eternally in mourning. Do you understand me, Raymond? In so doing I would create a religion of the 'Sentiment of Fidelity.' That would help me, give me strength and happiness.

Raymond (while Julia is talking to him he feels deeply moved, but as soon as she ends her speech he is again tormented by the same suspicion).

— But you never said, though, the most important word which would give me comfort!

Julia.— That is?

Raymond (resolutely).— You must swear, Julia, you must swear never, never to feel pity for that man's love, not even if, after a long fight with himself, he came to die near your door!

Julia.— Why do you ask me that?

Raymond.— Because only then should I feel assured of your fidelity!

Julia.— Wouldn't you prefer that I offer you my life instead of a mere oath?

Raymond.— Are you afraid of taking that oath?

Julia.— No, Raymond.

Raymond.— Yes, you are afraid of taking that oath, and as a pretext you speak of 'Fidelity.'

Julia.— I tell you I am not afraid of it. Don't go on like that, tormenting yourself in trying to shake the faith I have in myself. You want to make me realize that the love I have for you is not a real love, and that I will not have the strength to overcome all dangers I shall meet when you are gone. You have even tried to put in my mind a man whose love I never dreamed of. You took the trouble to bring him before my eyes, a real martyr, capable of making the most sublime sacrifice. After all that you insinuate that I am afraid to take an oath you asked of me. Heavens! Don't you understand that such an oath would be a miserable condition between us? Don't you understand it would not be the means to possess my soul?

Raymond (almost afraid).— No more! No more! You are rebelling!

Julia.— No, I am not, Raymond. If I should lie to you in this moment, it would seem to me as if I were breaking the chain which binds us.

Raymond (in a moment of excitement).— Yet you leave open this 'path of unfaithfulness!'

Julia (also excited).— Listen, Raymond, listen. Do you wish an assured means of keeping me with you after death?

Raymond.— Yes!

Julia.— Without giving me the opportunity of offering you my life?

Raymond.— Yes, yes!

Julia (deliberately).— Kill me! It will be the surest way to convince yourself. Do it Raymond, do it!

Raymond (interrupting her in despair).— I cannot do it. I should have done it long ago if I had had the courage.

Julia.— Then what do you expect from me?

Raymond.— To lie to me! Because I will find comfort only in the illusion of a lie, I implore you to lie to me. Do it well! Do it well!

Julia (bursting into tears, and stretching her arms towards him, so as to embrace him).— Poor Raymond! Poor Raymond!

Raymond (madly clasping her in his arms).— Lie to me well!

ACT III

The same room. There are no more books nor flowers on the table. Even the large leather armchair is gone.

SCENE I

JOSEPH and JULIA

When the curtain rises, no one is in the room. Through the window, which is open, one hears a woman's laugh.

Joseph (enters quickly from center, and goes to the window, grumbling. He looks older. We hear the same joyous laugh).

Joseph (looking outside the window).— Caroline! Why do you laugh so? It is indecent (another joyous burst of laughter). You have no respect, don't you see your mistress is in the garden?

Julia (outside in the garden).— Let her laugh, Joseph. She is still a young girl, let her laugh.

Joseph.— It seems to me she should help you to gather flowers, instead of laughing.

Julia (still outside. The tone of her voice sounds different; clearer and firmer).— I am glad to hear it. I did not permit any one to help me, not even you.

Joseph (leaving the window, murmurs with pleasure).— What a remarkable woman! If he only could see her from the other world! (*Reflects a little.*) But!

Julia (enters from center, wearing a simple white morning gown with black ribbons. Her neck is bare, and her sleeves turned up, her hair hanging down, tied with a ribbon. She carries in her arms a basketful of flowers. Entering goes immediately to show the flowers to Joseph).— You said there would not be enough? (*In order to show him all the flowers, she turns the basket upside down on the table.*) What do you say to that?

Joseph.— There are not too many for a wreath. You have a lot of roses and pinks, it seems to me they are not quite suitable for the occasion.

Julia.— I want to make a bouquet, not a wreath. To-day at the University they are going to honor his memory and uncover his bust. He will be called a great scientist, therefore a wreath would not be the proper thing. He must be thought of as if he were still living and among his colleagues and pupils. I feel he is always alive and beside me.

Joseph.— I must say you are right.

Julia.— My gift must be small, and I don't want any one to notice it. He was fond of flowers.

Joseph.— Do you remember, Madam, three years ago, the occasion of your birthday?

Julia.— Do you mean that time he came here secretly to gather some roses for me?

Joseph.— He came back home looking so happy, because he said he had been able to find for you the most beautiful roses ever grown under the sun.

Julia.— To-day, in the same garden, and from those same beds, I gathered flowers for him.

Joseph.— There were only five roses, Madam Julia, but they were so beautiful! I can still see him, as he was carrying them.

Julia.— And how much worry those roses caused him!

Joseph.— I remember how he insisted you should wear them all day long.

Julia.— But the worst part was that during the evening I lost one of them, and he was so much worried that he remained up all night, and not finding it, he became nervous and pensive. Heaven knows what his suspicions were!

Joseph (*astonished*).— Suspicions?

Julia (*making an effort to forget those sad remembrances*).— Let us talk about something else, Joseph. (*Looking at the flowers.*) I must work now.

Joseph.— I beg your pardon, but I alone must do the work. If you had the right to gather them, I have the right to put them together. I had been with my master for thirty years before you knew him. I was and still am faithful to him, as I am to you.

Julia.— All right. Each one his duty!

Joseph.— And I tell you I would not miss to-day's ceremony for anything in the world.

Julia.— I want you to go with me. Those gentlemen will send me the carriage, but I expressly wrote them that I wished to travel alone.

Joseph.— I quite agree with you. You had better always keep those young men at a certain distance.

Julia (smiling sadly).— You too, Joseph?

Joseph (raising his eyes to the sky makes a gesture, as to say: 'I must do my duty.'

SCENE II

JULIA, JOSEPH, FAUSTINA

Faustina (outside).— Is no one at home?

Julia.— Go and see who it is. When I came in I forgot to close the door.

Faustina (outside).— You don't need to knock when you find the door open. (*Enters from center. She is a woman about sixty. She is dressed loudly, and her appearance gives the impression that she is always in good humor.*)

Joseph (meeting her half way, so as to prevent her from coming in. Sharply).— Who are you?

Faustina.— Ask her who I am.

Julia (recognizing her).— Ah! Faustina! Faustina!

Faustina.— Yes, Faustina, a little older though, but still the same Faustina who knew you from babyhood.

Julia (embracing her).— Come to my arms, Faustina!

Faustina (going to kiss her, then stopping suddenly).— Will you permit me?

Julia.— Of course!

(*Kissing each other.*)

Faustina.— I have not seen you for thirteen years.

Julia.— More than that.

Faustina.— Since the day of your wedding. I saw you dressed as a bride.

Julia.— I remember, you came to see me — dressed as a bride!

Faustina (turning to JOSEPH, with pride).— Now you know who I am? (*To JULIA.*) You know why he pretended not to recognize me? Because he did not have a good conscience. That day he tried to flirt with me.

Julia (pretending to be serious).— What do I hear, Joseph?

Joseph.— Don't believe her, Madam Julia.

Faustina.— But all these years, Joseph, have been trying to you. You look much older.

Joseph.— I am near eighty. I am satisfied.

Faustina (to JULIA).— You look well.

Julia.— No, Faustina ——

Faustina.— Yes you do.

Julia.— After all the trouble I have been through?

Faustina.— What trouble?

Julia.— Don't you know the great misfortune which befell me?

Faustina.— You mean? Yes, I do know it. But it happened a long time ago?

Julia.— Two years and a few months ago.

Faustina.— Well ——

Julia.— It seems to me it happened yesterday.

Joseph (intercepting, with an air of pride).— Madam Julia will not be so easily consoled!

Faustina.— I am sorry for her.

Joseph (angrily).— I, on the contrary, am glad of it. If she had not been so, nothing in the world would have detained me here! (*Taking the basket of flowers, about to go out*).

Julia.— Don't be angry, Joseph. You see Faustina still treats me like a baby. When she left mother I still wore my frocks, and she does not realize that I am a woman now.

Faustina (to JOSEPH).— Did I say she should console herself with another man? Nothing of the kind! Another husband? Never! They gave me one, half a century ago, when I did not know anything about the world. But after him, dear Joseph, may his soul rest in peace, I made a big cross. If husbands were not men, then it would be a different question! But to have to live with men? Heaven forbid!

Joseph (going out quickly — grumbling).— Heaven forbid living with women! For my part — never!

Faustina.— My congratulations!

Joseph (shrugging his shoulders).

Julia.— A moment Joseph ——

Joseph (turning quickly).

Julia.— When the carriage comes let me know.

Joseph.— All right.

Julia.— I expect Dr. Ardenzi. When he comes show him in.

Joseph (looking astonished).— Do you wish to receive him?

Julia.— He is Raymond's disciple and also the secretary of the committee. He wrote me he wished to see me before we went to the ceremony. I cannot refuse to see him.

Joseph (cannot hide his disapproval, but used to obey as he is, says with resignation).— Well, I shall show him in!

(Exit)

SCENE III

JULIA, FAUSTINA

Faustina.— Is he watching you like a dog ?

Julia (sadly).— He used to love me so!

Faustina.— He seems a tyrant.

Julia (changing the conversation).— And you ? Tell me about yourself, Faustina. If you only knew how happy I am to see you! Since you came in it seems to me I am no longer so lonely, nor so unhappy! Your gay prattles remind me of my youth. Ah! How much good it does me! Speak, speak, Faustina! Where have you been, what have you been doing ?

Faustina.— I've been in America!

Julia.— Really!

Faustina.— Yes, what a bargain! They told me that down there gold grew like weeds —

Julia.— And instead ?

Faustina.— I left the gold country with only fifteen cents in my pocket!

Julia (looking at her and laughing).— Yet — to-day you are quite swell.

Faustina.— All these things don't belong to me. I've borrowed them to come to see you. My dear baby, I am in extremity!

Julia (joyously).— Faustina! Do you want to come back to me ?

Faustina.— Don't you understand I am here for that ?

Julia.— I am glad to take you back.

Faustina.— I am a little old, I know, but I can still work —

Julia.— The position I shall give you will not be hard. I shall make you the janitress of my asylum.

Faustina.— An asylum ?

Julia.— Yes, yes, it will be open soon. With the money Raymond left me I thought of opening an asylum for indigent widows. Do you understand ? Of course only for those who are not able to earn their living. But these are the conditions: They shall not marry again, shall live simply, submissively, quietly, humbly, almost a convent life.

Faustina (astonished).— And you ?

Julia.— I shall be with them. I shall be their elder sister, their principal —

Faustina.— A mother superior ?

Julia (laughing).— Precisely! A mother superior!

Faustina.— And I will be the janitress ?

Julia.— Yes, the janitress.

Faustina (gaily).— That is a fine idea!

Julia.— Do you accept?

Faustina.— I have a right to that position. Am I not indigent, and a widow?

Julia (much amused).— Do you intend to marry again, Faustina?

Faustina.— Not even if I came to this world again.

Julia.— Then I have no objection to letting you have the place.

Faustina.— I make my vow of 'chastity,' and become janitress.

(*Both laugh.*)

Julia.— Dear me, it is getting late! You must go, my dear. I have to comb my hair and dress.

Faustina.— Till I get the place I can help you.

Julia.— You don't want to go?

Faustina.— Of course not! I am here for good!

Julia (in a childish way).— Well, then, to-day you will comb my hair as you used to; will you?

Faustina.— Once upon a time I was the mistress of your hair.

Julia.— You're right, and you took good care of it!

Faustina.— You had such a quantity! Such beautiful tresses! Do you remember when, without your knowledge, I cut a tuft of hair to give to that young student?

Julia.— I remember you told me of it after the deed. How I scolded you.

Faustina.— And you were not too hard with your scolding.

Julia.— And just think all the years which have passed, and will pass, and that man will always possess a tuft of my hair!

Faustina.— It should not worry you. It will never become white.

Julia.— Don't speak about that. You know I have already found four or five gray hairs in my head.

Faustina (comically).— Good gracious! (*Taking hold of her head.*)

Julia.— Perhaps there are more!

Faustina (untying her hair).— I shall tell you precisely how many you have.

Julia (drawing back).— No! No!

Faustina (comically).— Dear me, how many!

Julia (sadly).— Really?

Faustina.— No, I did not find any white ones. It is still beautiful.

Julia (happy).— What! Not one! I don't believe you.

SCENE IV

JULIA, FAUSTINA, MANLIO, *then* JOSEPH

Manlio (stopping on the threshold, embarrassed).— May I come in ?

Julia (frightened, to FAUSTINA).— Dear me! Now it is your fault again! (*Trying to hide herself, and fixing her hair*).— Just a second, Mr. Ardenzi, please.

Manlio.— Certainly. (*Discreetly retires.*)

Julia.— Where are my hair pins ?

Faustina (helping her in fixing the hair).— You should not be ashamed to show your hair to a man.

Julia.— Of course I should!

Faustina.— Be assured he is quite bashful.

Julia (after arranging her neck and sleeves).— Come in, Mr. Ardenzi — come in.

Manlio (wearing a Prince Albert suit, and carrying in his hand his high hat and a paper, enters looking embarrassed and agitated).— I should beg your pardon for disturbing you.

Julia (still fixing her sleeve).— It is I who should beg yours.

Manlio.— I begged your servant to let you know I was here, but he remembered me — when I called with Luciano Marnieri, and he insisted upon my coming in without being announced. I see I —

Faustina (observing Manlio without being seen).

Julia.— No, I was only a little negligee, and I am afraid I am still so. What can I do for you ?

Faustina (aside to JULIA).— May I go into your bedroom ?

Julia.— Certainly.

Faustina.— Where ?

Julia (pointing to the left).— There!

Faustina.— Don't forget the conditions of your asylum!

Julia.— That is ?

Faustina.— Never to receive a man.

Julia (laughing).— You silly!

Faustina (bowing to MANLIO, exit on left).

Manlio (not daring to advance).

Julia.— Do sit down. (*Sits.*)

Manlio.— I thank you. (*Putting his hat and the manuscript on the table, remains standing.*)

Julia (looking at him, astonished).— Don't you wish to sit down ?

Manlio (sitting, rather nervous).— You must forgive me, madam, if I look so agitated. In coming here I had unwittingly to cross the professor's last wish, which he expressed to us when we came here that day. In a moment of terrible anxiety he begged us never to come back here. And though — I am certain he did not mean me, yet I feel a little upset to find myself in the very same room. I still remember the sad expression of his eyes, and I feel sorry now not to have respected his last wish.

Julia (quite upset, but proudly).— Could you not have explained everything in a letter?

Manlio.— Truly I could not! My companions have asked me to deliver a speech to-day. It is my desire to praise principally his high morality and kindness of heart. I should also like to mention your devotion to him, in continuing his good work. I should like to tell them of your plan of opening an institution for indigent widows. But I could never have done this without your authorization — and I know I could never have obtained it by writing to you, as your modesty would have revolted.

Julia (quite annoyed).— But why speak of me?

Manlio.— No tribute could be more appropriate or touching than your idea of raising this kind of temple to the memory of your husband near his tomb.

Julia.— I am raising this temple for myself, not for others.

Manlio.— But to others it appeals as a symbol of devotion. You will agree with me that this extraordinary fidelity of yours to our beloved dead will be a sublime example to other women.

Julia (controlling herself).— I am sorry that my personal affairs are an object of discussion and appreciation, as I do not seek to be an example.

Manlio.— But our appreciation denotes our sincere admiration.

Julia (quickly).— I am not seeking admiration! It seems to me that my sorrow, my tears, my suffering, has to be controlled every day on account of people's admiration. I am watched closely, and it seems I have even reached the point when humanity can no longer live without my virtues! My whole soul is stifling, and I am under the impression that I am no more free to think, to feel, and to suffer!

Manlio (timidly rises).— If I had known —

Julia (rising, a little embarrassed).— No — I did not mean to offend you, don't pay much attention to my words — I am always a little nervous, and am sometimes not responsible for what I say. Only I beg of you not to say anything to-day about my institution, or to speak of me. I am coming to the ceremony, because I feel it is my duty, yet I hope you, and all the others who knew me at the time that dear Raymond was living, will henceforth think of me as if I were dead.

Manlio.— You may rely on me, that to-day I shall not mention your name.

Joseph (enters from center, carrying a card tray, and remains at the door, hoping to be seen).

Julia.— What is it, Joseph?

Joseph.— A lady would like to see you.

Julia.— Who is she?

Joseph.— She is an elderly lady. She gave me her card. (*Giving her the card, and at the same time mistrustfully sizing up MANLIO*).

Julia (in reading the name, makes a gesture of surprise. After a moment).— I think it must be very late, and I must get ready to go out. Has the carriage come?

Joseph.— Not yet.

Julia.— Well — show the lady in, and ask her to wait a few minutes, while I get dressed.

Joseph.— All right. (*Exit.*)

Julia (to MANLIO).— Then I can rely on you?

Manlio.— You may.

Julia (giving her hand).— Good day, Mr. Ardenzi.

Manlio.— My respects, madam.

Julia (exit left).

Manlio (a little mortified, goes to get his hat and manuscript, then shrugs his shoulders as if to say, 'I was wrong to come.' In going out center he meets MADAM MARNIERI).

SCENE V

MANLIO, MADAM MARNIERI

Manlio (astonished and even frightened).— You here, Mrs. Marnieri?

Mrs. Marnieri (who was coming rather timidly, is also frightened at seeing MANLIO).— Yes — I came — to ask a little favor of Mrs. Artunni —

Manlio.— I thought you did not know her.

Mrs. Marnieri.— In fact I never met her.

Manlio.— Therefore you are coming here for another reason than asking a favor?

Mrs. Marnieri.— Why do you say that?

Manlio.— Because a few days ago I received a letter from your exiled son, telling me his state of mind was — (*both speak in a low tone, fearing to be heard*).

Mrs. Marnieri (with tears in her voice).— Yes, Manlio, I am continually worrying about him.

Manlio.— It is rather strange, this frenzy for a woman whom he does not possess, and by whom he cannot hope to be loved.

Mrs. Marnieri.— How can you judge him? Luciano is built like that. He is a real martyr. When he was a boy I saw him spend night after night thinking over his mystic dreams. He has to-day substituted a woman for his old asceticism, and this woman will be for all his life the light of his soul! Tell me frankly, Manlio,— do you think it will help, my speaking to her?

Manlio.— Indeed I think your idea rather absurd.

Mrs. Marnieri (still defending herself). Do you think it is absurd to hope that a good woman may be affected, when she learns that a young man is dying of love for her?

Manlio (firmly).— You forget that between her and Luciano there is a dead person, whom they both loved.

Mrs. Marnieri.— But Luciano did sacrifice himself for him, like a martyr.

Manlio.— I agree with you.

Mrs. Marnieri.— And then?

Manlio.— I am not stating only my opinion, but also the general conviction, that Mrs. Artunni, who was a model wife, will remain faithful to her husband, even after his death.

Mrs. Marnieri.— No, no, Manlio. I shall speak to her, because I have my son's happiness too much at heart. Something tells me to hope.

Manlio.— Are you hoping she will end by loving Luciano?

Mrs. Marnieri.— She might be affected at the idea of being loved, and that would be the first stepping stone towards winning her heart.

Manlio.— I shall not add another word, as I might appear to you too cruel. I am going, wishing you with all my heart that you may succeed.

Mrs. Marnieri.— If you write to Luciano, please don't mention the matter.

Manlio.— Of course not.

Mrs. Marnieri.— He would curse me if he knew I came here to her.

Manlio.— I immediately understood you came here on your own account.

Mrs. Marnieri.— He would never have let me come.

Manlio.— Well, good by, Mrs. Marnieri.

Mrs. Marnieri.— Good by, Manlio.

Manlio (exit).

SCENE VI

MADAM MARNIERI, JULIA

Mrs. Marnieri (as soon as she is left alone she looks frightened, and hardly dares to move or to glance around the room. She gives the impression that she feels like an intruder. Raises her eyes to the sky, as if to utter a prayer. All at once she hears JULIA's footsteps, composing herself, waits patiently).

(Enter JULIA, dressed in black, but rather stylishly, wears small hat with veil.)

*Julia (seeing MADAM MARNIERI, puts on an air of reserve).—*Madam——

(Both women look at each other for a moment)

Mrs. Marnieri.— If I have taken a liberty in calling on you, it was because I relied on your courtesy — on your kindness — and also because my name is probably not unknown to you.

Julia (coldly).— Will you take a seat?

Mrs. Marnieri.— I am afraid I came at an inopportune moment. Are you going out?

Julia.— I can spare a few moments.

Mrs. Marnieri.— Thank you. *(Sits.)*

Julia (sitting also).— What can I do for you?

Mrs. Marnieri.— I was — very anxious — to meet you——

Julia.— The reason?

Mrs. Marnieri.— I had always heard about your kindness ——

Julia (mistrusting).— There must be a reason, for we do not always wish to meet all those who are kind.

Mrs. Marnieri.— Of course not!

Julia (starts).

Mrs. Marnieri.— For a long time — I have wanted to come here, but I have always been afraid ——

Julia (dissimulating).— I don't understand you.

Mrs. Marnieri.— You are right. You cannot understand. *(Hesitating, and trying to find prudent words.)* I should like to ask you — a favor — to listen to me — perhaps ——

Julia (not wishing to listen, yet almost tempted to do so).— I cannot prevent you from speaking ——

Mrs. Marnieri (a little encouraged).— I told you I was anxious to see you, yet afraid — that — all my hopes are centered in you — and that you can comfort much this poor mother's heart ——

Julia (quickly).— I am not responsible, Mrs. Marnieri, for your son's madness.

Mrs. Marnieri (surprised).— Then you know all?

Julia.— Unfortunately, I do.

Mrs. Marnieri.— But how did you know it? He always tried to hide it!

Julia.— Please do not remind me of that unhappy occasion. But I am astonished that time has not yet cured him of such a wild fancy.

Mrs. Marnieri.— On the contrary, he feels for you now more than he did before. His youth, madam, is little by little being destroyed.

Julia.— A mother always exaggerates her son's sorrows. Love can never destroy youth.

Mrs. Marnieri.— No, it is not a mother's exaggeration, for I have always tried to be my son's best friend. He always confides everything in me. One day he confessed to me what I have just told you. Two years ago, when he went away, he hoped to forget you, as he trusted implicitly in his good sense and in his sincere interest in his work. He prevented me from going with him, nor could I have gone, on account of my husband, who is much older than I, and of my daughter, who needs my assistance. Yet we remained good friends, all his letters told me of his struggles in trying to overcome his love. You say 'Love can never destroy youth.' I am afraid you are mistaken. A kind woman like you must know all the sorrows that every human soul goes through. But love is our greatest sorrow!

Julia (sadly).— I am sorry to listen to you, but I am doing it more from respect to you than from any other motive.

Mrs. Marnieri.— Why?

Julia (bitterly).— I should feel like a coward in my conscience, if I was obliged to pity a man because he loved me!

Mrs. Marnieri.— Pity is not cowardice!

Julia (energetically).— I must judge myself. Your clemency will not make me clement. After all, of what benefit would my pity be to him?

Mrs. Marnieri.— Love may come through pity.

Julia (rising).— I should prefer to die, if I knew I loved. Our conversation is ended, Mrs. Marnieri.

Mrs. Marnieri (rises very humbly).

Julia.— You came to disturb my peace, and you did not stop to think that you were violating the sacred mission of my life. I pardon you, because I understand your blind motherly love. Yet I feel indignant towards your son for violating my sentiments, and for sending you here to try to win me over to him.

Mrs. Marnieri (sincerely).— No, Luciano does not know anything! I swear to you. He does not know anything.

Julia (astonished — after a moment).— I beg your pardon for offending your son.

Mrs. Marnieri (humbly).— I only deserve your indignation, I believed that all that Luciano has suffered had paid his debt of gratitude to the poor dead. I see my mistake, and I am punished for it. It is a terrible blow to me now to know that you are angry with me.

Julia (quite affected).— Believe me, I am not angry with you. On the contrary! I am sorry to be the cause of all your troubles, and I feel almost as if I were guilty. I sincerely hope that your son will regain his peace of mind. Indeed that will be my happiest day.

Mrs. Marnieri.— I have no more hopes. (*Crying.*)

(*A silence.*)

Julia (impulsively wishes to embrace her, but draws back immediately. Sweetly.)— You must not give up. I admit your son is exceptionally sensitive. We will admit that this struggle to overcome his sentiment may make it stronger. But no one can foresee what 'Fate' is preparing for him, and moreover there are a good many other women on the earth besides myself. (*Trying to control her tears.*)

Mrs. Marnieri (shakes her head, as if to say she is not convinced. Drying her tears).— Good by.

Julia.— Good by.

Mrs. Marnieri (after a moment of silence).— Sometime may I call on you?

Julia (wishing to refuse, yet having no courage to say no, murmurs).— If you wish——

Mrs. Marnieri.— Thank you. (*Giving her hand.*)

Julia (shakes it, without looking at her).

Mrs. Marnieri (holding it for a few seconds — with tears, murmurs).— Thank you. (*Slowly exit.*)

Julia (tired out, sits and immediately appears to be under a magnetic influence. Remains under that ecstatic spell for a few seconds, giving the impression that she is looking far away.)

(*After a few seconds.*)

SCENE VII

JULIA, JOSEPH

(Enter Joseph, dressed in mourning, carrying in one hand his hat, and in the other the flowers. Remains standing at the door. Seeing that JULIA has not seen him, announces).—Madam, the carriage is at the door.

Julia (starts — pause — then the expression of her face changes. Putting down her veil, rises).—Here I am, Joseph. Let us go. (Goes towards the door.)

Joseph (stands solemnly at the door, while JULIA makes her exit).

ACT IV

A very large room of monastic aspect. The ceiling is quite high. On the right there are two doors, on the upper part of one of them is written 'Manager.' On the left opposite there is another door opening into a hall. In the left corner up stage a staircase going downstairs. In the center a very large double window. On the right a large table, a few chairs here and there. In the middle hangs an electric globe. Another small electric light on the stairs, another in front the 'Manager's' door.

SCENE I

SISTER ELISABETH, FAUSTINA, MADAM MIRELLI, the MARCHIONESS ANTONUCCI, ADALGISA, DONNA SOPHIA, an old WOMAN

(The room is almost dark. It is vesper time. A great deal of light comes through the window. The street and the houses across the way are lighted. Seated in a semicircle, with their backs to the window are, SISTER ELISABETH, dressed like a nun, the MARCHIONESS ANTONUCCI, a woman about forty-five, very aristocratic, MADAM MIRELLI, young, slender, sweet looking, dressed in mourning: ADALGISA, who is about thirty or thirty-five, she is semicomical, dressed fantastically, yet charmingly; DONNA SOPHIA, an old woman, with white hair; FAUSTINA, dressed in uniform, gray; an old woman, thin and bent, wearing a black shawl. SISTER ELISABETH is seated in the middle and presides. They are reciting the rosary. All the other women answer in chorus.)

Sister Elisabeth.—Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi —

The others.— Parce nobis, Domine.

Sister Elisabeth.— Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi ——

The others.— Exaudi nos, Domine.

Sister Elisabeth.— Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi ——

The others.— Miserere nobis.

(*They all cross themselves, then rise, except the old woman.*)

Faustina.— Our conscience is at peace to-night!

Sister Elisabeth (*turns on the electric light. Then goes to the old woman and offers her her arm. She slowly rises and then both go out through the door leading into the hall.*).

Donna Sophia (*to FAUSTINA, who wants to take away her chair.*)— This belongs to me. (*Then pushing her chair, which has two pillows, goes near the table, sits, puts on her spectacles, and begins to read the paper.*).

MADAM MIRELLI also brings her chair near the table, and begins to embroider. FAUSTINA puts a chair near the table for the MARCHIONESS, who sits in front of MADAM MIRELLI, and begins to read a book through her gold lorgnette.

(ADALGISA looks out of the window).

Sister Elisabeth (*crosses the stage, going to the staircase.*).

Adalgisa.— Sister Elisabeth, are you in a hurry?

Sister Elisabeth.— Yes, I am very busy downstairs.

Adalgisa.— I want to show you how our neighbor is busy to-night, sending her telegraphic messages.

Faustina.— Sister Elisabeth, please don't look.

Sister Elisabeth.— What is it?

Adalgisa.— Nothing shocking! Only a beautiful girl, who is sending telegraphic messages with lighted matches to her sweetheart, across the way.

Sister Elisabeth.— Have a good time. (*Exit through the staircase.*)

Faustina.— I think it is terrible to have such a thing happening near an asylum.

Adalgisa (*quite amused*).— Being the janitress of the asylum, why don't you report it to the police?

Faustina.— I should rather give a piece of my mind to that man.

Adalgisa (*teasing her*).— Tell Madam Sophia your opinion of men.

Faustina.— What do I think of men? If I were not afraid that Madam Julia, who is in the next room, nursing Madam Ferrucci, would hear me, I should tell you a thing or two.

Donna Sophia.— Don't you like men?

Faustina (*comically*).— Dear me! Heaven forbid! (*Runs away through the staircase.*) Libera nos, Domine!

The Marchioness (languidly looking at Mirelli).— You are still embroidering to-night ?

Madam Mirelli.— I should like to finish it before I go away.

The Marchioness.— Is it to-morrow you are going ?

Madam Mirelli.— Yes, to-morrow morning. My lawyer, who got the little capital, which belonged to my poor husband, is waiting for me in Rome.

The Marchioness.— You are no longer poor.

Madam Mirelli.— I shall not be rich, yet I have no more right to remain here.

The Marchioness.— I want to give you a little souvenir, a piece of old lace, a last remembrance of my past happy days. Will you accept it ?

Madam Mirelli.— You are very kind, but you had better keep it.

The Marchioness (sadly).— There is no chance for me to wear it. I shall die here. Put it on the first time you wear a colored dress.

Madam Mirelli.— I am going to live in the country, and I shall always wear mourning.

The Marchioness (rising).— Who knows! You are twenty-two years old, the sentimental, equivocal age!

Madam Mirelli (convincingly).— Not for me, though.

The Marchioness (laughing).— Time will tell! (*Exit from right door.*)

Adalgisa (from the window).— Donna Sophia!

Donna Sophia.— What is it ?

Adalgisa.— To-night they have a lighted candle.

Donna Sophia.— A lighted candle means " Burning love."

(*A silence.*)

SCENE II

JULIA and the others

Julia (enters from the left and stops for a moment. She is dressed severely, but elegantly. She looks a little sadder, but her expression is more emancipated. None of the others see her. She looks at them, especially at MADAM MIRELLI. Smiling, advances, without making any noise, approaches MADAM MIRELLI and puts her hands to her eyes, changing her voice, says:).— Who am I ?

Donna Sophia (turns and remains quiet).

Adalgisa (does the same).

Madam Mirelli (without hesitation).— Our benefactress! Our angel.

Julia.— No.

Madam Mirelli.— Our principal.

Julia.— No.

Madam Mirelli.— Our friend, my friend—

Julia.— Yes. (*Putting down her hands.*)

Madam Mirelli (rising).— Dear Lady!

Donna Sophia.— Good evening, Madam Julia.

Julia.— Don't disturb yourself. Please go on reading your paper.

Donna Sophia.— Thank you. (*Goes on reading.*)

Julia (to MIRELLI).— Be seated, dear.

Madam Mirelli.— I had finished.

Adalgisa (advancing).— You will say I have already kissed your hands twenty times to-day — but allow me to kiss them again. (*Kissing JULIA's hands.*)

Julia.— Here is the gay girl.

Adalgisa (pointing to MIRELLI).— Yet, you prefer the melancholy one.

Julia (caressing MADAM MIRELLI).— Poor dear! She is always faithful to her sorrow.

Adalgisa.— When your favorite girl is gone you will miss her.

Julia (jokingly).— Jealous?

Adalgisa (sadly).— “No longer I fear in my heart
Love and jealousy.”

(*Gaily again.*) Good by. For to-night I leave you all alone. (*Returns to the window. In passing near DONNA SOPHIA pulls down her paper.*)

Donna Sophia (picking up the paper).— Are you crazy?

Madam Mirelli.— Would you believe me, Madam Julia, I should prefer to remain poor so as to be able to stay here with you.

Julia.— I believe you.

Madam Mirelli.— Will you keep me here as your secretary, your collaborator? And let me put the little I have into this institution?

Julia.— No, dearest, no. (*Sadly.*) I alone must keep it, because only to me is it necessary. I alone must love it, because there is nothing else for me in the world.

The Marchioness (returning with a piece of lace).— At last I have found it— Ah, our lady is here.

Julia.— A piece of lace?

The Marchioness.— A little present for Madam Mirelli. (*Giving it to MIRELLI.*)

Madam Mirelli (taking it).— Thank you very much!

The Marchioness.— I asked her to put it on the first time she wears a colored dress.

Julia (astonished).— A colored dress!

Madam Mirelli (smiles and shrugs her shoulders).

Adalgisa (jokingly).— Madam Julia, Faustina is speaking with a man, and then she says she hates them!

Julia.— It must be Don Lorenzo, the druggist.

Adalgisa.— Not a bit of it. Don Lorenzo is short and fat. But— Faustina is running here.

Julia (annoyed).— Who can it be!

SCENE III

FAUSTINA, JULIA, and the others

Faustina (in her exaggerated way, outside).— Dear me! Dear me! Surely he must have come from the insane asylum! (*Enters, much excited.*)

Julia.— What is it, Faustina?

Faustina.— A lunatic, Madam! A lunatic!

Julia.— What?

(*They all surround Faustina*)

Faustina.— I was standing outside to enjoy the fresh air, as it was terribly hot inside, when a well-dressed young man began to ramble about. It was getting dark, and no one was passing by. Indeed I was getting afraid.

Julia (anxiously).— Well?

Faustina.— Can you imagine how I trembled when I saw him approach me! His eyes were flashing and his face was very pale. I said to him, ‘Whom are you looking for?’ Trembling he murmured, ‘Could I see Mrs. Artunni?’ ‘It is after eight now,’ I answered, ‘and my mistress does not receive. Of course she is free to do it if she wants to, but I know her habits. Madam so as to give the good example receives like the others during the visiting hours, that is between twelve and two.’

Julia (nervously).— And he?

Faustina.— I could not make out what he wanted! At first he leaned against the wall, like one who had received a blow, and breathing heavily he begged me to run here to you. Immediately he changed his mind, and implored me to stay. Then he said he would go; soon after, he would remain. He was so agitated, so nervous, I even saw tears in his eyes. Upon my word, it is the first time in my life that I have felt sorry for a man!

Julia (dissimulating her impatience).— Did you not ask his name?

Faustina.— I had the hardest time to make him tell it to me! His name

is something like 'Sarnieri' — 'Varnieri' — I did not quite understand. But it seems to me it is something like the one of the lady who comes here sometimes.

Julia (turns to the women, and tries to control her anxiety).— It must be Dr. Luciano Marnieri, one of my husband's disciples. He is the son of that lady who comes here sometimes —

Adalgisa.— That sweet lady with gray hair?

Julia.— Yes; her son just came back to Naples, after five years of absence, and I am not surprised that he called. But I am surprised, though, to hear he was acting so strangely. Faustina, will you please repeat to him the answer you just gave him?

Faustina (not moving, hoping that she will contradict the order).

Julia (harshly).— Well?

Faustina.— I am going. (*Exit.*)

SCENE IV

JULIA, SISTER ELISABETH, MADAM MIRELLI, DONNA SOPHIA, the
MARCHIONESS, ADALGISA

Julia (making an effort to change the conversation).— By the way, Faustina said it was after five, and Sister Elisabeth has not yet brought that broth to Mrs. Ferrucci. I told her of it this morning.

Adalgisa.— Shall I go down to the kitchen?

Julia.— No, no! She might be offended. (*Going to the staircase and calling.*) Sister Elisabeth! Sister Elisabeth!

Sister Elisabeth (outside).— I am coming. I am preparing the broth.

Julia.— I was just calling you for that.

The Marchioness.— Is she going to take some broth?

Donna Sophia.— Then she is better!

Julia.— Yes, she is better! It is a real miracle! (*Excitedly.*) I am so happy! (*In the effort to dissimulate her joy, all at once she grows pale.*)

Adalgisa.— Madam Julia!

Madam Mirelli.— What's the matter?

(*From one side and the other, ADALGISA and MADAM MIRELLI support her.*)

Julia.— I am all right.

Donna Sophia.— You are so pale!

Julia (trying to justify herself).— Perhaps it was the news about that young man, whom my husband loved as a son, that has caused me this

emotion. It brought to my memory again all my past sorrows; but I feel all right now.

*Sister Elisabeth (enters bringing some broth).—*Here's the broth, Madam Julia.

Julia.—Thank you, Sister Elisabeth! Wait, we will go in together. (*To the other women.*) Don't stand on ceremony. Is it not the time you generally retire? Good night, and don't worry about me! (*Gently to them.*) Why do you look so anxious? I am not so frail as you think. Be cheerful! (*Opens MADAM FERRUCCI'S door and says*) Here I am, at your orders, Madam Ferrucci. (*Exit.*)

Sister Elisabeth (follows her).

SCENE V

DONNA SOPHIA, ADALGISA, MADAM MIRELLI, *the* MARCHIONESS

(*All four women remain in silence, looking thoughtful. MADAM MIRELLI looks more sorrowful than the others. ADALGISA goes to the window and has tears in her eyes.*)

Donna Sophia (aside to the Marchioness). Listen; yesterday I read the name of that young man in the paper.

The Marchioness.—What did it say?

Donna Sophia.—Something — about Africa — Yes, it spoke about a dangerous journey — of the desert — of science — I really don't recollect —

The Marchioness.—Well?

Donna Sophia.—Would you give the news to Madam Julia?

The Marchioness.—Where's your paper?

Donna Sophia.—She took it last night.

The Marchioness (knowingly).—Then — don't worry. Good night to all.

Donna Sophia.—Good night.

Adalgisa (mechanically).—Good night!

Madam Mirelli (does not answer).

The Marchioness (a little angry).—Shall I see you to-morrow morning, Madam Mirelli?

Madam Mirelli.—Yes, of course!

The Marchioness (exit).

(*A long silence.*)

Donna Sophia (carrying away her chair, says aside). They all have the blues to-night. I'd better retire to my room.

(*Exit left.*)

Adalgisa (going to MADAM MIRELLI).—I don't believe our lady is well. You had better wait for her here. She will be pleased to see you.

Madam Mirelli (sadly).—Thank you, Adalgisa. I was thinking the same thing.

(They shake hands.)

Adalgisa (exit left).

SCENE VI

MADAM MIRELLI, JULIA

Madam Mirelli (begins to put away her embroidery in her workbasket, in order to gain time).

Julia (seeing her — runs to her impulsively).—I thought I should find you here!

Madam Mirelli.—And I thought you wanted to see me.

Julia.—Yes, remain with me, this is our last night.

Madam Mirelli.—Is there anything worrying you?

Julia.—It is not of myself that I want to speak, but of you. Do tell me all about your plans. What are you going to do? You are young, pretty —

Madam Mirelli.—I am going to live as peacefully as you do here.

Julia.—With me it is different. I have many duties.

Madam Mirelli.—You created them, so as to feel happy. I shall try to imitate you, in your kindness, in your manner of living, so simply and solitary.

Julia.—What, without happiness? — without joy?

Madam Mirelli.—I believe it will be a joy for me.

Julia.—But could you find joy in your resignation, in your arid heroism, in your solitude, strength to resist all the world's temptations, when your youth will cry out for 'Love'? No, Gilberta, don't follow my example! Don't. Let your youth follow its own instinct, its own road to the end!

Madam Mirelli.—But it is my own instinct which leads me never to forget the past, though nothing obliges me to.

Julia.—Is there no promise you made to him?

Madam Mirelli.—No.

Julia.—Did he wish you to remain faithful to him?

Madam Mirelli.—No! No! On the contrary he exhorted me not to delude myself to live on 'eternal sorrow.' I still can hear his generous words, yet nothing will compel me to tear his memory from my heart.

Julia (timidly and mortified).— Then what I have just told you must have seemed horrible?

Madam Mirelli.— How can you think so? After all you have repeated to me what he used to say, yet you have acted as I do.

Julia (firmly).— Yes, undoubtedly I have done what you are doing, and I shall go on doing so. But I beg of you to be always a sister to me.

Madam Mirelli.— Always!

Julia.— You will write to me often, will you?

Madam Mirelli.— Quite often.

Julia.— Write me long letters and tell me everything that happens to you every day. Even from far away I want to feel that your simple, confident soul is near mine, trying to help me. Always tell me all your thoughts, all your feelings, especially speak of those whom you love and how you love them.

Madam Mirelli (affectionately).— I promise you, Madam Julia, I shall write you all the minute details of my life and all the impulses of my heart.

Julia (discouraged).— Ah, if only all that would suffice to defend me!

Madam Mirelli.— What do you fear? And then from what danger can I defend you, I who am less than you?

Julia.— From the dangers which you don't know, and which you will never know, my dear. Yes, you must defend me. Bear me continually in your thoughts, remember me in your prayers, you who have so much faith in God, be to me an example. Your eyes are so pure, your soul so serene! Kiss me,—hold me in your arms — let me feel your heart!

Madam Mirelli (embraces her, and deeply moved, contemplates her for a few minutes).

Julia (cries).

SCENE VII

JULIA, MADAM MIRELLI, SISTER ELISABETH FAUSTINA

Sister Elisabeth (coming from MADAM FERRUCCI'S room).

Julia (as soon as SISTER ELISABETH enters, she stops crying).

Sister Elisabeth.— I beg your pardon for disturbing you, but Madam Ferrucci knowing that Madam Mirelli is going away to-morrow morning has expressed the desire to say good by to her to-night.

Julia.— Go to her, Gilberta.

Sister Elisabeth.— Shall I put out the light?

Julia.— No, I'll do it.

Sister Elisabeth.— Shall I close the window?

Julia (trying to find a pretext to keep the window open).— No, it is too warm — better leave it open.

Sister Elisabeth.— Good night.

Sister Elisabeth (exit through the staircase).

Julia (to MADAM MIRELLI).— I shall see you to-morrow morning?

Madam Mirelli.— Of course.

Julia.— Good night.

Madam Mirelli (goes to MADAM FERRUCCI'S room and closes the door after her).

Julia (nervously, quite worried almost as attracted by a magnetic force goes to the window and looks out. Immediately she startles, exclaiming:).— Madam Marnieri! (Much agitated.) Why is she coming here? What has happened?

SCENE VIII

Madam Marnieri (entering all out of breath, and looking much worried).— Will you receive me?

Julia (starting).— Madam Marnieri!

Madam Marnieri.— I must speak to you —

Julia (offering a chair).— You?

Madam Marnieri (standing, but leaning on the chair).

Julia (approaching MADAM MARNIERI).— Well?

Madam Marnieri.— You understand if I came here to-night it was for a very serious cause!

Julia.— Good heavens!

Madam Marnieri.— At this very moment, while we are talking, Luciano is on board a vessel, which sails to-night for Africa! It is I who insisted upon his calling on you before he went. I deluded myself! You refused to see him. I am in despair, he will go away forever.

Julia.— Forever, no!

Madam Marnieri.— Yes, forever!

Julia (trying to find out).— I read in the newspapers that he and others were sent down there on a scientific mission. Even if it is a dangerous journey, yet I don't imagine it will be their perdition.

Madam Marnieri.— For him, yes, I feel it.

Julia.— Did he not ask your advice?

Madam Marnieri.— No, he returned the other day from Milan, and as

soon as I learned his determination, with tears I begged him to change his mind. But nothing moved him! He remained impassive, and he did not even show a little sign of consideration for his old mother.

Julia.— If he remained so impassive, it means he hopes to see you again.

Madam Marnieri.— No, that is not it! If you only knew how in these last days my soul has been watching his! I know more about him than he does himself. Anyhow, I am not mistaken! This morning I hid myself and heard the following conversation which he had with his friend Manlio: 'If I never come back, tell my mother that death was for me a blessing.' Do you doubt it? He is going down there and this journey is the beginning of a suicide. You must help me!

Julia (frightened).— What can I do?

Madam Marnieri.— Ah! Madam Julia! (*With anxiety; insisting.*) You ask me that? He had the heroism to run away from you, trembling, every time I spoke to you about him. I, in his place, have waited patiently, hoping in your kindness. You know everything and you know that no love can be compared to the one he has for you. You know also, as I do, if you do not detain him here he will die —

Julia (controlling herself).— If I detain him! And then?

Madam Marnieri.— You will in time renew your existence.

Julia (putting her hands to her eyes, so as to chase away something which frightens her).— No —

Madam Marnieri.— You shall find in his gratitude a treasure of kindness which you have never known in your life —

Julia.— Don't! Don't! Can't you see I am suffering! Can't you understand that my energy is leaving me?

Madam Marnieri.— Good Lord! Are you helping me?

Julia (almost as if cursing).— Through his mother this lover becomes inexorable! (*Falling on a chair.*) For four years you have made me feel your boy's constancy and sufferings. For four years you have been trying to drag me out from my tomb, hoping to see me revive! Yet, you are not aware of your cruelty!

Madam Marnieri.— If I had not been cruel I could not have succeeded in bringing you to him —

Julia (bitterly).— You are mistaken, Madam Marnieri. What you have been doing is the fulfillment of the work started by the same man who prevented me from loving another and who died in my arms burning with jealousy. This has been my crucifixion! You have completed his work because it was he who revealed to me your son's love, it was he who made me tremble for my future. (*After a second.*) In his last moment he spoke

again of your son. With his white lips he mumbled words, but the dreaded name was pronounced, clearly and exactly. And while saying that, he opened his eyes and clutched my hand. Then — all at once, he let it go — and died crying — (*a brief silence, crying*). God is witness that I did not take any oath! Yet, as the years pass, I feel chained to him more and more.

Madam Marnieri.— No, Julia, the supreme necessity of doing good will make you give up the abnegation you have imposed upon yourself.

Julia.— No, I am chained to him. I am lost!

Madam Marnieri.— I shall break your chains. I shall break them to save my son. Come with me, Julia, come. You must follow me courageously. It is your duty! When he sees you he will again wish to live.

Julia.— You are convincing me!

Madam Marnieri.— No, you are still resisting me!

Julia (without breath).— No — no — because I shall come with you.

Madam Marnieri (in an exalted manner).— My God, I thank you!

Julia (almost afraid of losing her courage, she rises quickly).— Let us go — let us go —

Madam Marnieri.— Yes, let us go at once.

Julia (frightened). Let us not make any noise. I don't want any one to know it. You go first, while I get a shawl. And going out my friends will not see me —

Madam Marnieri.— We are already late, Julia!

Julia.— After all it is better you should prepare him, as I shall not be able to say anything —

Madam Marnieri.— And if you arrive too late?

Julia.— Rely on me!

Madam Marnieri.— I rely on you.

Julia.— Good by.

Madam Marnieri (exit).

SCENE X

JULIA, MADAM MIRELLI

Julia (as soon as she is alone she begins to tremble as if she were going to commit a crime. She feels the necessity of putting out the light, therefore she pushes the electric button and immediately goes to the room on the door of which is the sign 'Manager.' The room is dark now, the moonlight reflects in the room.)

Madam Mirelli (coming out from MADAM FERRUCCI).— No! I shall not say good by, but au revoir! (*Closes the door, then goes to the table and picks up her workbasket and quietly exits into the hall.*)

Julia (returns from the same room, wearing a shawl on her head. Seeing MADAM MIRELLI, she stops for an instant. Then halting goes towards the staircase. But in the center of the room stops, shudders, and gives the impression that she cannot go any further. In the midst of her terror she murmurs.) I cannot! (Stretches her arms in front of her, as if to defend herself. Then draws back.) I cannot! (Suffocating, halting, falls convulsively upon her knees, bursting into tears, she murmurs.) I cannot! I cannot! I cannot!

THE RED STAR

BY LECONTE DE LISLE

(Translated from the French by C. R. Crittenden)

*There will be, in the abyss of the sky, a great red Star, named Sahil.—
The Rabbi Aben-Ezra.*

O VER the Continents, heavy waves,
Where thrills of a world have palpitated,
Swell in the silence and immensity;
The Red Sahil in depths of tragic nights,
Sole torch, darts its blood-stained eye on the flood.

Through the endless space, these bare solitudes,
This dull abyss, deaf, void, to nothingness,
Sahil, supreme witness, and gloomy sun,
Which makes the sea sadder, blacker in nakedness,
Gloats over, with cruel sight, the universal sleep.

Genius, love, sorrow, despair, hate, envy,
What one dreams, what one loves, and that which lies,
Earth and Sky, nothing more than the old Moment.
On the forgotten dream of Man and of Life,
The red Eye of Sahil bleeds eternally.

FRANCIS THOMPSON

By EDWARD J. H. O'BRIEN

'And there, having prayed to the Lady of all Mercies,
I went suddenly asleep like a beaten, sobbing child.'

DANTE: *Vita Nuova*

IN a London hospital, not long ago, there died a man of the rarest genius, whom sorrow had marked for her own from his earliest years. His work was accomplished, and naught remained for him in life. For the past ten years he had intellectually ceased to be, and the main enduring product of his labors was composed during the four years preceding 1897.

This man was Francis Thompson, who, like Lamb, was 'called by sorrow and anguish and a strange desolation of hopes into quietness, and a soul set apart and made peculiar to God.' He was a singer of songs, and as one whom Coventry Patmore has acknowledged as a peer, his demise is worthy of more than a passing note — above all, since his life was romantic, and his poems, nay even his name, are practically unknown in America. There are others of the little band to which he belongs whose works should be more familiar to us, but none of them, — not even Lionel Johnson, — has the fine poetic madness, the Olympic festival of thought, 'eclipsing many a softer satellite,' to such a notable degree as Francis Thompson. His life will interest us in many respects, especially as it has many points of resemblance to the unhappy years which De Quincey has pictured for us in his poignant autobiography. We may say that both men had sown in tears that they might reap in triumph. They expected bread and they were given a stone.

Francis Thompson was born in 1860, the son of a physician practising in Manchester, England. His parents, who were converts to the Roman Catholic faith at the time of the Oxford Movement, gave their son a good education, sending him to St. Cuthbert's College, at Ushaw, near Durham, where he spent seven years, and became thoroughly familiar with the Greek and Latin classics, as well as with English literature. From Ushaw he went to Owens College in his native city, to study medicine, but much against his will. The poet has told how the anatomy classes aroused in him so much disgust that he never attended another after the first session. Instead of studying medicine, he spent his whole time in the public libraries,

following the bent of his own desires. His father, discovering these pursuits, disowned him, and the sorrow of neglected filial duty only served to aggravate the bodily ailments of the poet. He fell dangerously ill in Manchester, like De Quincey.

When he was sufficiently recovered, he made his way with difficulty to London, and found, as the other writer before him, that Oxford Street is lacking in sympathy to impecunious would-be litterateurs. His little stock of money gradually dwindled, and, as he was too delicate for manual labor, when he could not obtain literary employment, he sank lower and lower into the mire. Like De Quincey also in this respect, at one time his sole riches consisted in two books,— a copy of *Æschylus* in one pocket and a copy of *Blake* in the other. Reduced to beggary, so that he sold pencils in the street, and performed such other trifling services to gain a little bread as the law allows in its toleration of mendicants, one touching incident occurring at this time reminds us of De Quincey's meeting with Ann. In its pictorial suggestiveness, some of us may think the story, as Thompson tells it, even more pathetic. Let us hear it in the author's own words:

‘ Forlorn and faint and stark,
 I had endured through watches of the dark,
 The abashless inquisition of each star;
 Stood bound and helplessly
 For Time to shoot his barbed minutes at me;
 Suffered the trampling hoof of every hour
 In night's slow-wheelèd car,
 Until the tardy dawn dragged me at length
 From under those dread wheels; and, bled of strength,
 I waited the inevitable last.
 Then there came past
 A child; like thee a spring-flower, but a flower
 Fallen from the budded coronel of spring,
 And through the city streets blown withering.
 She passed,— O brave, sad, loveliest, tender thing,—
 And of her own sad pittance did she give
 That I might eat and live:
 Then fled a swift and trackless fugitive.’

We may consider this as the gift of one child to another, for, as a friend has beautifully phrased it, ‘ Thompson's was a child-spirit retained to the end: wandering perplexed through this tangled and bewildering world:

looking out upon it all with the grave and solemn wonder of a child.' Indeed the poet once expressed a desire that after death he might be sought in the nurseries of heaven. At this time Thompson slept at night on the waste ground near the Covent Garden arches, where they throw the refuse of the great market. 'Hidden and uncared for as the pulse of anguish in the breast of the tiniest bird that has fluttered down to its nest with the long-sought food, and has found the nest empty and torn.' Perhaps we shall not judge him very harshly when we learn that he took refuge from the cold and the wet in the drugs whose use his medical training, brief as it was, had taught him.

After five years of terrible privation, in which he must have sounded the very bass-string of humility, he made up his mind to die. As a last resort he had sent some verses and a prose article to a small publication, *Merrie England*. The editor, Mr. Wilfrid Meynell, now well known for his life of Disraeli, thrust his contribution, whose appearance was more than usually unpromising, written as it was on dirty scraps of paper, in a pigeonhole of his desk, to read in some hour of leisure. Chancing to peruse the verses in a general house-cleaning some months later, he was so struck with their merit that he printed them in the following number of his magazine. Of the author, however, he could find no trace. Meanwhile, Thompson had seen his verses in print, and, believing that he had been cheated in his last resort, was overcome with despair. Sick in the world's regard, wretched and low, his spirit broken like a bird's wings against a wall, he went to a chemist's shop where he was known, and where his deadly purpose would not be suspected. There he purchased some laudanum, with which he retired to the Covent Garden arches and prepared to die. He had already taken half of the dose when he felt a hand plucking at his sleeve, and looked up to see, as he thought, the form of Thomas Chatterton by his side, who bade him desist from his purpose. Almost at once there flashed across his mind the memory of how the day after that other unhappy poet had taken his life a letter had been delivered at his lodgings, which would have afforded him the needed relief, had it come a few hours earlier. And so it happened with Francis Thompson. Mr. Meynell had traced him to the chemist's shop, and, from the description which he had received there, on the following day found the poet, whose hopes had been for the moment revived.

Thompson had now fallen into kind hands, and after he had received medical treatment, was placed with the Premonstratensian Fathers, at Storrington. Here, between 1893 and 1897, Thompson wrote and published the whole of his poetical work. He lived later with Franciscans at Crawley and elsewhere, fighting bravely against consumption, until about six months ago, when the flame of his life began to flicker. A change to the country was

advised, and he became the guest of Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, at his country home, not far from Storrington. On November 2, 1907, he entered the Hospital of St. John and St. Elizabeth, in St. John's Wood, London, and there he passed away quietly at dawn, on November the thirteenth,

‘ Fading from a garden to a grave,
Passing without a tear into the stars.’

A friend has written, ‘ It was a part of him to die in the month of the dead. His death was the last dissolving harmony in a life of clashing discords.’ There were elements in his character which were the air and fire and dew of songs, yet no genius had so sad a life,— not Keats, not Chatterton, not Poe,— and we are tempted to echo his own words, written in retrospect, yet felt none the less keenly:

‘ Ah! must —
Designer infinite!—

Ah! must thou char the wood ere thou canst limn with it?’

It is now for us to turn to his poems, that we may see the wonders he has accomplished in so brief a space. A wanderer alike in vision and in life, he had climbed his Calvary, and his peace was made, after such privations as would have rendered any other man incapable of literary work, if indeed they had not deprived him of his reason. Yet he willingly learned in suffering that he might teach in song.

‘ I know not any tone
So fit as thine to falter forth a sorrow.’

His published work is comprised in three slender volumes entitled respectively ‘ Poems,’ ‘ Sister Songs,’ and ‘ New Poems.’ There are two methods of being great, says Arthur Benson; one is by largeness, the other by intensity. It is our task here to trace in the poet's work the existence of both these essential attributes of greatness.

In the first volume we find the series entitled, ‘ Love in Dian's Lap,’ of which Coventry Patmore, no mean critic, has written that it is such a series of poems as St. John of the Cross might have addressed to St. Teresa, and as might well have filled the heart of Laura with pride. They resemble Crashaw when at his best, not only in their religious ecstasy, but above everything in all the daringly fantastic imagery, that strange but characteristic mixture of simplicity and artifice, of spontaneous passion and of studied conceit, which we find in the earlier poet. However, the artifice is so cleverly concealed that at first reading we should hardly suspect Thompson's indebtedness. These poems well exemplify the distinctive qualities, good and

bad, of the poet's work. On the one hand they are rather obscure, abounding in conceits and extravagantly metaphorical, but on the other hand, they are eminently characterized by a wealth and dignity of imagination, a depth and subtlety of thought, a magic and mastery of language, to which no modern poet since Shelley has been able to attain. Indeed Thompson's 'Ode to the Setting Sun' may be ranked with the few sublime odes of the language. We may surely say the same of 'The Hound of Heaven,' printed in the first volume, which has the same appeal as a prelude of Bach, and in which, to quote the words of Coleridge, his thought 'strides on so far before you that it dwindles in the distance.' Like Coleridge, 'his voice rolls on the ear like the pealing organ, and its sound alone is the music of thought. His mind is clothed with wings; and raised on them, he lifts philosophy to heaven.'

'The Hound of Heaven' tells how the poet's soul is pursued by grace divine, and how it finally comes to a realization of the Infinite Love. Amiel, if I am not mistaken, has remarked that we are all visionaries, and that we see nought else in life but our soul's reflection. This may be true. But it is given to the poet to see deeper than the rest of mankind, and this poem is noble for the elemental truth which it makes clear. The first stanza portrays the flight of the soul from an angry and a jealous God, according to the picture which it has conjured up in terror.

' I fled Him down the nights and down the days;
 I fled Him down the arches of the years;
 I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways
 Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
 I hid from Him, and under running laughter
 Up vistaed hopes I sped;
 And shot, precipitated
 Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears,
 From those strong Feet, that followed, followed after.
 But with unhurrying chase,
 And unperturbèd pace,
 Deliberate speed, majestic instancy.
 They beat — and a voice beat
 More instant than the Feet —
 ' All things betray thee, who betrayest Me!'' '

The poet's soul seeks a place of rest in the faces of the men and women around, but all in vain.

‘ I sought no more that after which I strayed,
 In face of man or maid;
 But still within the little children’s eyes
 Seems something, something that replies,
 They at least are for me, surely for me!
 I turned me to them very wistfully;
 But just as their young eyes grew sudden fair
 With dawning answers there,
 Their angel plucked them from me by the hair.’

Truly the poet might have said with Launcelot:

‘Also this
 Fell into dust, and I was left alone
 And wearying in a land of sand and thorns.’

When all else fails, he has recourse to a land of phantasy such as Peer Gynt framed for himself, but, like Peer Gynt, he is driven to the point where he says,

‘ Yea, faileth even now even dream
 The dreamer, and the lute the lutanist.

In the midst of his despair, the pursuing footstep catches up with him.

‘ Halts by me that footfall:
 Is my gloom, after all,
 Shade of this hand outstretched caressingly?
 “ Ah! fondest, blindest, weakest,
 I am He whom thou seekest!
 Thou dravest love from thee who dravest Me.” ’

Stopford Brooke has said: ‘ To write a lovely song is one of the rare things of the world.’ Yet the songs written by Francis Thompson at this time, like Blake’s ‘ Songs of Innocence,’ sprung from ecstasy and tears, ‘ are such as a child who had the wisdom of an angel might sing as it wandered in the flowery glades of Eden.’ ‘ Daisy ’ is Wordsworthian in its simplicity:

‘ The hills look over on the south
 And southward dreams the sea;
 And with the sea breeze hand in hand
 Came innocence and she.

' Where mid the gorse the raspberry
Red for the gatherer springs
Two children did we stray and talk
Wise, idle, childish things.

' Oh, there were flowers in Storrington
On the turf and on the spray;
But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills
Was the Daisy-flower that day.

' She went her unremembering way,
She went, and left in me
The pang of all the partings gone,
And partings yet to be.

' Nothing begins and nothing ends,
That is not paid with moan;
For we are born in others' pain,
And perish in our own.'

This stanza also is beautifully simple:

' Her eyes were clear, her eyes were Hope's,
Wherein did ever come and go
The sparkle of the fountain drops
From her sweet soul below.'

So again:

' How shall I gauge what beauty is her dole
Who cannot see her countenance for her soul,
As birds see not the casement for the sky?
And as 'tis check they prove its presence by,
I know not of her body till I find
My flight debarred the heaven of her mind.'

One more stanza from a poem of a different nature will suffice to show the poet's consciousness of the Divine immanence in all things. It is from his 'Corymbus for Autumn.'

' Or higher, holier, saintlier, when, as now
 All nature sacerdotal seems, and thou.
 The calm hour strikes on yon golden gong
 In tones of floating and mellow light,
 A spreading summons to even-song;
 See how there
 The cowled night
 Kneels on the eastern sanctuary stair.
 What is this feel of incense everywhere?
 Clings it round folds of the blanch-amiced clouds,
 Upwafted by the solemn thurifer,
 The mighty Spirit unknown,
 That swingeth the slow earth before the embannered throne? '

Is it strange that Sir Edward Burne-Jones should be so affected by this novel kind of poetry that he wrote: ' Shall I ever forget how I undressed and dressed again and had to undress again,— a thing I most hate,— because I could think of nothing else? '

To have felt and to have loved Francis Thompson's poetry is one of those spiritual gains in our lives which, come what may, can never be lost entirely. He was rather a soul, a breath, than a man. It is the mind of a woman in the heart of a child, so that we feel for him less of admiration than of tenderness and of gratitude. And though his life was comparatively a dream, nevertheless, it was, as Hazlitt has written, a dream of infinity and eternity, of death, the resurrection, and a judgment to come. Francis Thompson has done the world an inestimable good, if the world will but recognize it, for he has succeeded in cloaking all things vividly with the Divine Presence. Truly a miracle was performed by this poet inspired of God.

' And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us.'

IS LONGFELLOW'S 'EVANGELINE' A PRODUCT OF SWEDISH INFLUENCE?

BY EDWARD THOSTENBERG

I

I HAVE never been in Nova Scotia,' wrote Longfellow to a friend. 'As far as I remember, the authorities I mostly relied on in writing 'Evangeline' were the Abbé Raynal¹ and Mr. Haliburton:² the first for the pastoral, simple life of the Acadians; the second for the history of their banishment.' This is all the information that the poet has given us concerning the sources of his material for Part I of the 'Evangeline'; we know, however, that his friend Hawthorne, gave him the theme for the poem from a story³ once told by a French Canadian.

Of all the many biographers of Longfellow there is only one who has seen in the 'Evangeline' evidences of some direct source of influence apart from those mentioned above. This biographer⁴ says:

'The picture he paints of the Acadian bliss that prevailed at Grand Pré before the arrival of the British ships *must have been drawn from some memory of his European travels*. It has the marks of a long-settled country, and scarcely resembles Acadia in spite of "the forest primeval" which forms so magnificent a background. The inhabitants, in reality, were wretchedly poor, ignorant, and priest-ridden. Not in the whole country, one might venture to say, was there a farmsteading so comfortable as that which the poet bestows on Evangeline's father.'

From what particular 'memory of his European travels,' then, did Longfellow draw his picture of life in the village of Grand Pré? There are a number of passages in the 'Evangeline' which, when compared with the facts regarding the poet's interest in Sweden, its people and its traditions,

1. The Abbé Guil. Thos. Fr. Raynal: 'A Philosophical History of the Settlements and Trade of Europeans in the East and West Indies.'

2. Judge Thos. C. Haliburton: 'An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia,' published in 1829.

3. This story is recorded in Hawthorne's 'American Notebooks,' Oct. 24, 1838.

4. J. N. McIlwraith: 'A Book about Longfellow.' New York, 1900, page 75.

indicate that his memory of that country and his knowledge of its language and literature lent color to almost every scene in Part I of the poem.

Early in 1835 Longfellow was appointed Professor of Modern Languages at Harvard, and soon after the appointment he left for Europe to spend a summer of study in Sweden and Denmark. He sailed in April and arrived in Stockholm, Sweden, in the latter part of June. Immediately upon his arrival he took up his Scandinavian studies, including a course in Swedish under Professor Lignel, of Upsala University, who was spending the summer in the capital. He pursued his study of Swedish with remarkable zeal, and made such progress that, shortly after beginning to learn the language, he felt that he could speak of it as an 'easy language to read,' adding to this the remark that it was 'the most musical of the Scandinavian languages, its pronunciation being remarkably soft and agreeable.' Already during this course of instruction he made some acquaintance with the writings of Esaias Tegnér and other Swedish poets, as we see from his mention of them in these words: 'Sweden has one great poet and only one. That is Tegnér, Bishop of Wexiö, who is still living. His noblest work is "Frithiof's Saga," a heroic poem, founded on an old tradition. Franzén, Stagnelius, Atterbom,— those are other scalds of the North; and then there are a multitude of small authorlings.' With the exception of one week spent at Upsala Longfellow remained in Stockholm until the last week in August, when he left for Denmark over the Götha Canal to Gothenburg. His visit to Sweden was concluded with a week's stay in this city, while waiting for a boat to Copenhagen.

After his return to America, Longfellow renewed his Scandinavian studies while preparing to give a course of twelve lectures on German literature and kindred subjects. With reference to these lectures he writes to a friend:¹ 'In this course something of the Danish and Swedish (the new feathers in my cap) is to be mingled. From all this you will gather that my occupations are of the most delightful kind.' According to an outline of the course, as appended to a letter² from Longfellow to his father, two of the twelve lectures were on Swedish literature. It is very probable that the article on Tegnér's 'Frithiof's Saga,' which he published³ two months later, was drawn from one of these lectures.

Some of the impressions which Longfellow carried with him from his stay in Sweden are recorded in the introductory portion of the above-mentioned article, where his recollections center mainly about two thoughts:

1. G. W. Green, in a letter dated Feb. 1, 1837.

2. This letter is dated May 12, 1837.

3. In the July number of *The North American Review* for 1837.

the thought of the gloom and solitude of a forest landscape in Sweden, on the one hand, and on the other, the 'primeval simplicity,' the idyllic life of the peasant population. A typical Swedish landscape is pictured in these words:

'You pass out from the gate of the city, and, as if by magic the scene changes to a wild, woodland landscape. Around you are forests of fir. Overhead hang the long, fanlike branches, *trailing with moss*, and heavy with red and blue cones. . . . On a wooden bridge you cross a little silver stream. Anon you come forth into a *pleasant and sunny land of farms*.'

This very kind of landscape, changing suddenly from the thick forest to the pleasant farms, is described in the opening lines of 'Evangeline':

'This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks
Bearded with moss and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand, like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,

Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian farmers,

Waste are those *pleasant farms*, and the farmers forever departed!'

Longfellow's description of life among the Swedish peasants has many features in common with his picture of life among the inhabitants of Grand Pré. The people are the same simple, God-fearing peasant folk. They are characterized by the same inborn modesty and courteous, hospitable manners; the same traits of industry and frugality; the same devotion to their religion; the same attachment to traditions and superstitions; and they even live in very much the same kind of houses.

'The (Swedish) peasants,' he says, 'take off their hats as you pass. You sneeze, and they cry, "God bless you." The houses in the villages and smaller cities are all built of hewn timber. . . . In many villages there are no taverns, and the peasants take turns in receiving travelers. The thrifty housewife shows you into the best chamber, the walls of which are hung round with rude pictures from the Bible. . . . Solitary travelers come and go in uncouth one-horse chaises. . . . You meet, also, groups of Dalekarlian peasant women, traveling homeward or cityward in pursuit of work. They walk barefoot, carrying in their hands their shoes, which have high heels under the hollow of the foot, and the soles of birch bark.'

Just as the houses in Swedish villages, according to the above account, are all built of hewn timber, so also in the village of Grand Pré the houses were 'strongly built, with frames of oak and of hemlock.' The poet had

observed, as we see, that in Swedish villages where there were no *taverns* the peasants took turns in receiving travelers; the same spirit of hospitality prevailed in the Acadian village, for 'every house was an *inn* where all were welcomed and feasted.'

In calling attention to some of the more prominent features in the religious life of a Swedish village, Longfellow says in part:

'Frequent, too, are the village churches, standing by the *roadside*, each in its own little garden of Gethsemane. Near the churchyard gate stands a *poor box*, fastened to a post by iron bands and secured by a padlock, with a *sloping wooden roof* to keep off the rain.'

The 'poor box,' 'sloping roof' (penthouse), and 'roadside' are all met with in the following lines of 'Evangeline':

'Under the sycamore tree were hives overhung by a *penthouse*,
Such as the traveler sees in regions remote by the *roadside*,
Built o'er a *box for the poor* or the blessed image of Mary.'

The significance of these parallels is obvious. Who is the 'traveler,' if not Longfellow himself, and what 'regions remote' does he have in mind if not the rural districts of Sweden?

In another paragraph of his article on Tegnér's 'Frithiof's Saga,' the poet speaks about the customary manner in which Christmas is celebrated among Swedish peasants, and in this connection he refers to their fondness for 'brandy and nut-brown ale in wooden bowls.' In the poem he mentions in one place, 'flagons of home-brewed ale,' and in another, 'the pewter tankard with home-brewed nut-brown ale.'

A description of a village wedding in one of the southern provinces of Sweden is included in the article on the 'Saga.' In this description Longfellow says that the bride 'is dressed in a red bodice and kirtle, with loose linen sleeves.' In connection with the scene (in 'Evangeline') in which Father Felician is introduced, we read that 'matrons and maidens sat in snowwhite caps and kirtles scarlet and blue and green.' The poet here employs a word (kirtle) which in his own language is archaic, while its Swedish cognate (*kjortel*) continues to be the regular word for 'skirt.' His rather frequent use (three times each in the poem in the article on the 'Saga') of this otherwise obsolescent word seems, therefore, to have been induced by his knowledge and thought of the Swedish word, '*kjortel*.' The peasant women of Sweden, moreover, have long been known for their delight in gay colors of dress, such as the poet gives to the Acadian women. In many sections of the country all the women of a given parish formerly

wore costumes of a definite combination of colors, whereby they could be readily distinguished from their peasant sisters of other parishes. Even in later years the particular combination of 'snow-white caps, and kirtles scarlet and blue and green' has been known to survive quite commonly in some of the southern provinces, for example, Dalekarlia, Scania, and Söderwanland. From his direct mention of the Dalekarlian peasant women (see page 303), we may infer that Longfellow had visited their province, and we know that he passed through the other two on his way both to and from Stockholm.

During his sojourn in Sweden our poet did not fail to notice how the old Northern myths continued to exercise a peculiar power over the credulous minds of the peasants,—how ancient traditions had survived among them, wrapt up in various popular tales about demons, giants, dwarfs, and goblins.

'In every mysterious sound that fills the air, the peasant still hears the trembling of Odin's steed, which many centuries ago took fright at the sound of a church bell. . . . The sound of Strömkarl's flute is heard in tinkling brooks and his song in waterfalls. In the forest, the Skogsfrun, of wondrous beauty, leads young men astray; and Tomtgubbe hammers and pounds away, all night long, at the peasant's unfinished cottage.'

The goblin here mentioned, the '*tomtegubbe*,' plays an unusually large and important role in the folklore of the Scandinavian North. He is a friendly spirit who performs many and valuable services for those who treat him kindly and are industrious and upright in their living. While the peasant sleeps, the goblin is busy putting up buildings for him, chopping his wood, or carrying heads of grain to his barn. But his chief occupation is that of looking to the proper care of the domestic animals, and with these he accordingly makes his home. This last service mentioned of the goblin was clearly in the poet's mind when, in the '*Evangeline*,' he characterized the notary public as a man who related tales, among them the tale 'of the goblin that came in the night to water the horses.'

Although the actual date of Longfellow's landing in Sweden is not definitely known, yet we learn from a letter to one of his friends (the Swedish poet, Carl August Nicander) that he was in Stockholm already as early as June 8th. Accordingly, he must have reached the country on or before midsummer day, a great national holiday there, especially with the peasants. To them the midsummer festival is the one great event of the year, when old and young forget their cares and engage in different kinds of pastime and merrymaking, such as feasting, excursions, athletic contests, and the like, their chief form of amusement being the dance around the May-pole.

In a description of life on an agricultural estate near Stockholm, the following account is given¹ of a midsummer festival as it is celebrated by the tenants of the estate:

'On the broad lawn by the chateau, the great May-pole is raised, decorated with evergreens and bunches of wild flowers, surmounted with flags and funny little dolls or lay figures in *peasant costumes*, waving their tiny stiff arms in ludicrous welcome to all comers. And they come, *gathering from all sides*, the tenants and their families, the peasants and the labourers, from the ploughboy and the milkmaid to the draymen, the keepers and gardeners, the cowboys, and the dairy folk. After they have partaken of the *repast spread out under the trees*, the dancing begins round the May-pole. First, the children in a *merry circle hand in hand*, singing children's rhymes and country glees; then the youths and maidens, *waltzing and polkaing* on the green, to the music of the *country fiddlers*; while the *elders sit under the trees and look on*.'

Longfellow's description of the feast of betrothal at Evangeline's home is, in substance, the same as the above account of a Swedish midsummer festival:

'Now *from the country around*, from the farms and the neighboring hamlets,
Came in their *holiday dresses* the blithe Acadian *peasants*.

Under the open sky, *in the odorous air of the orchard*,
Striped of its golden fruit, *was spread the feast of betrothal*.
There in the shade of the porch were *the priest and the notary seated*;
There good *Benedict sat*, and sturdy *Basil* the blacksmith.
Not far withdrawn from these, by the ciderpress and the beehives,
Michael, *the fiddler*, was placed, with the gayest of hearts and of waistcoats.

Merrily, merrily *whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances*.
Under the orchard trees and down the path to the meadows
Old folk and young together, and children mingled among them.'

The fact that the above account of a Swedish midsummer festival contains so many elements in common with the description of the 'feast of betrothal' clearly indicates that this scene of the poem is the product of Long-

1. O. G. von Heidenstam, 'Swedish Life in Town and Country.' G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London. 1904, page 230 ff.

fellow's recollections from Sweden. That he knew of the Swedish celebration of midsummer is certain, for he mentions it in the article on the 'Saga':

'And now the glad, leafy midsummer, full of blossoms and the song of nightingales, is come! Saint John has taken the flowers and festival of heathen Balder; and in every village there is a May-pole fifty feet high, with wreaths and roses and ribands streaming in the wind, and a noisy weather-cock on top, to tell the village whence the wind cometh and whither it goeth.'

II

In his remarks on the 'Saga' as a literary creation, both with regard to the plan of the whole poem, as well as to the execution of its separate cantos, Longfellow has nothing but words of praise for the author. 'Indeed we consider the "Legend of Frithiof" as one of the most remarkable productions of the age,' he says. He mentions the old scalds of the North, who communed with nature and interpreted the deep, moaning sounds of forest and sea as being the voices of living beings,—and adds: 'With this same baptism has the soul of the modern scald been baptized.' His high estimate of the genius of Tegnér is expressed elsewhere in even more glowing terms:

'Tegnér stands foremost among the poets of Sweden; a man of grand and gorgeous imagination, and poetic genius of a high order. . . . The modern Skald has written his name in immortal runes; not on the bark of trees alone, in the "unspeakable rural solitude" of pastoral song, but on the mountain tops of his native land, and the cliffs that overhang the sea, and on the tombs of ancient heroes whose histories are epic poems.'

When we consider the laudatory tone of the foregoing remarks we are not surprised to find passages in the 'Evangeline' which point to literary influence from Tegnér's principal work, 'Frithiof's Saga.' In reality, the two poems offer such striking parallels, both in point of thought and of language and structure, that the question of influence appears to be not so much a question of fact as of extent.

In the first place, the circumstances surrounding the early life of hero and heroine are very similar in the two productions. Thus, just as Gabriel's father and Evangeline's father were lifelong friends, so also the father of Frithiof and the father of Ingeborg. In both poems we are told that hero and heroine grew up together from childhood, and that they learned their letters together,—Gabriel and Evangeline under the instruction of Father Felician, Frithiof and Ingeborg under the 'fostering care' of Hilding. In both poems we follow them in their childhood sports,—Gabriel and Evangeline watch the blacksmith at work, they go bounding down the hillsides

on sledges in winter, they climb to the swallows' nests on the rafters of the barn. At about the same age in life Frithiof and Ingeborg go sailing in the young hero's sloop, he climbs to the highest birds' nests to rob them of their eggs and young for her delight, he carries her over rushing streams and picks berries and flowers for her. With the exception of a few minor particulars the above circumstances are not only very similar in substance, but even their arrangement and the number of the words employed in their description are very nearly the same in the two poems.

At this point in the story both poets make a very sudden transition from a picture of the childhood days of hero and heroine to a narration of later incidents (Evangeline):

' Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer were children.
He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the morning,
Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought into action.
She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a woman.'

(Frithiof's Saga, Holcomb's Translation):

' But quickly sped are childhood's days.
There stands a youth whose ardent gaze
With pleading and with hope is laden,
And there with budding charms, a maiden.'

Aside from the general agreement of thought in these two passages, there is also a distinct similarity of effect in the opening line of the one as compared with the other.

Longfellow's remark¹ about the third canto of 'Frithiof's Saga' shows that he was particularly well impressed with it, and by translating a portion of the same he probably gained his first experience at writing hexameter verse, the measure which he later adopted for his 'Evangeline' and 'Miles Standish.' The canto contains an account of the estate which Frithiof had inherited from his father. After a few introductory lines there follows a short description of those most common domestic animals: cows, sheep, and horses. In the 'Evangeline' there is a description of the same animals, and they are mentioned in the same order as in 'Frithiof's Saga:'—cows—sheep—horses. The description of the cows (Evangeline):

' Twilight descending
Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the *herds* to the home-
stead.

1. 'It is conceived and executed in a truly Homeric spirit.'

Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful heifer.
Proud of her snow-white hide and the ribbon that waved from her collar.

Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded their *udders*
Unto the milkmaid's hand; whilst loud and in regular cadence
Into the sounding *pails* the foaming streamlets descended.

(Frithiof's Saga:)¹

'But in the valleys full widely around there fed on the greensward
*Herd*s with *sleek shining hides* and *udders* that longed for the *milk-*
pail.'

The horses are described (Evangeline):

'*Cheerily neighed* the steeds, with dew on their *manes* and *their*
fetlocks,
While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and ponderous saddles,
Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with *tassels of crimson*,
Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with blossoms.'

(Frithiof's Saga:)

'Coursers two times twelve, all mettlesome, fast-fettered stormwinds,
Stamping stood in the line of stalls, and tugged at their fodder.
Knotted with red were their *manes*, and *their hoofs* all white with
steel shoes.'

The thought of the spiritedness of the horses is expressed first, as we see, by both poets, before they give any attention to outward appearances. The horses' manes and hoofs are then mentioned by both, and the two descriptions produce the same general effect on the reader's imagination, although Longfellow places the 'tassels of crimson' on the saddles, while Tegnér makes the manes 'knotted with red.'

The scene which in either poem immediately follows the description of the domestic animals has an unusually large number of elements in common with the corresponding scene of the other. It is an evening scene indoors.

1. This and the following excerpt from the 'Saga' are taken from Longfellow's translation of the third canto.

In the 'Evangeline' Benedict is seated by the '*wide-mouthed fireplace*'; in Frithiof's Saga, Thorsten thus formerly sat by the '*stone-built hearth*' with its '*wide-mouthed smoke flue*.' Benedict's '*armchair*' has on its back '*faces clumsily carved in oak*'; on the columns of Thorsten's '*high-seat*' were represented '*two gods carved in elm*.' In Benedict's house the '*pewter plates on the dresser reflect the flames*' from the fireplace '*as shields* (reflect) the *sunshine*'; in Thorsten's hall the '*shields on the wall* were resplendent, white as the orb of the *sun*.' Benedict sings '*carols of Christmas*'; Thorsten related stories to his friends at '*Yule-tide*.' Both to Benedict and to Thorsten is given the appellation, '*the old man*.'

III

Another of Tegnér's best known works, the '*Children of the Lord's Supper*,' is almost certain to have furnished material for some of the descriptive passages in the '*Evangeline*.' And it is only natural that this should be so, partly because of the idyllic character of both works, partly also because Longfellow had translated this Swedish poem a few years (Oct. and Nov., 1841) before writing his '*Evangeline*.' That the poem had made a deep and lasting impression on his mind can be seen from the following personal testimony in a letter¹ to his friend Samuel Ward: 'The poem is indeed beautiful; and in parts so touching that more than once, in translating it, I was blinded with tears.' In the same letter he announces his intention of publishing the translation in his volume of '*Ballads and Other Poems*,' which was about to appear, and thinks that it 'will make the most attractive part' of the collection. In the preface to this volume he remarks that the 'poem enjoys no inconsiderable reputation in the North of Europe, and for its beauty and simplicity merits the attention of English readers.' 'It is an Idyl,' he says, 'descriptive of scenes in a Swedish village; and belongs to the same class of poems as the "*Luise*" of Voss and the "*Hermann und Dorothea*," of Goethe. But the Swedish poet has been guided by a surer taste than his German predecessors. His tone is pure and elevated, and he rarely, if ever, mistakes what is trivial for what is simple.'

In these brief comments the poet has unknowingly called attention to some of the poetic qualities that have made his '*Evangeline*' so dear to the hearts of its readers, those idyllic qualities which possess the power of appealing to human sympathies and of 'touching' human emotions. Above all, a natural '*simplicity*,' of the incidents narrated as well as of the manner

1. Dated November 6, 1841.

in which they are told, is characteristic of the two poems alike, and this simplicity is coupled with a corresponding 'pure and elevated tone.' Just as truly, therefore, as Tegnér's poem is an idyl, 'descriptive of scenes in a Swedish village, Longfellow's work is an idyl, descriptive of scenes in an Acadian village.

Not only in plan and in the characteristic style of its narration does the 'Evangeline' appear to have been modeled after the 'Children of the Lord's Supper,' but even in subject matter, for there are passages which indicate quite distinctly that some of the scenes and one of the characters (Father Felician) were drawn directly from this source. In order to illustrate the actual relation between the two works, the following parallels are offered for comparison (Evangeline):

'There in the tranquil *evenings of summer*, when brightly the *sunset*
Lighted the village street and *gilded the vanes* on the chimneys,

Solemnly down the street came the *parish priest*, and the children
Paused in their play to *kiss the hand* he extends to bless them.
Reverend *walked he among them*; and *up rose matrons and maidens*,
Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.'

Compare 'Children of the Lord's Supper':

'The church of the village
Gleaming stood in the *morning's sheen*. On the spire of the belfry,
Decked with a *brazen cock*, the friendly *flames of the Spring-sun*
Glanced like tongues of fire, beheld by Apostles aforetime.

Lo! there entered then into the church the *Reverend Teacher*.
Friendly he was to behold, and glad as the heralding angel
Walked he among the crowds, but still a contemplative grandeur
Lay on his forehead as clear as on moss-covered gravestone a sun-
beam.

All the congregation arose in the pews that were numbered.
But with a cordial look to the right and the left hand, the old man
Nodding all hail and peace disappeared in the innermost chancel."

Closing lines:

*'Up rose the children all and each bowed him, weeping full sorely,
Downward to kiss that reverend hand.'*

In the above excerpts the following correspondences of thought should be noticed: (1) the symbolical reference to the 'summer evenings' and the 'spring morning,' the one to suggest peace and contentment, the other to remind of youthfulness and joy; (2) the mention of the sun's reflection on the 'vaness' and on the 'brazen cock,' for the purpose of giving vividness to the scene; (3) the introduction of the minister as moving along while the people arise at his approach; (4) the cordial relations between pastor and parishioners, as indicated by their friendly exchange of greetings; (5) the act of the children kissing their pastor's hand as a particular mark of love and respect.

The gentle and cordial attitude of the minister in the preceding passages is turned into an aspect of awe in the ones which follow (Evangeline):

*'In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry contention,
Lo! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician
Entered with serious mien, and ascended the steps of the altar.
Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed into silence
All that clamorous throng; and thus he spake to his people;
Deep were his tones and solemn, in accents measured and mournful
Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, distinctly the clock strikes.'*

Compare 'Children of the Lord's Supper':

*'Now went the old man up to the altar; and straightway transfigured
(So did it seem to me) was then the affectionate Teacher.
Like the Lord's prophet sublime, and awful as Death and as Judgment
Stood he, the God-commissioned, the soul-searcher, earthward
descending.
Glances, sharp as a sword, into hearts that to him were transparent
Shot he; his voice was deep, was low like the thunder afar off.
So on a sudden transfigured he stood there, he spake and he ques-
tioned.'*

The sublime, awe-inspiring conduct of the minister and the distinct

mention of his deep voice are so strikingly similar in the two passages that any further comment on the agreement of thought seems unnecessary. Attention is called, however, to the singular fact that each of the passages quoted contains *seven* lines, in both cases introductory to an address by the pastor, in which he puts *five* separate questions to his auditors.

Particular interest attaches to the passage from 'Evangeline' which is about to follow. The lines immediately preceding it contain a description of the 'feast of betrothal' at Evangeline's home. At the very height of merriment the church bell is sounded, drum beats are heard over the meadow, and the men rush to the church. Soon after, the English guard march up from the ships to the church to announce to the villages the manifesto of the king. In the midst of these stirring incidents the churchyard scene is introduced:

'Thronged ere long was the church with men. *Without*, in the
churchyard,
 Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and hung on the
headstones
Garlands of autumn leaves and evergreens *fresh* from the forest.'

Compare 'Children of the Lord's Supper':

'Swept and clean was the *churchyard*. Adorned with a leaf-woven
arbour
 Stood its old-fashioned gate; and *within* upon each *cross* of *iron*
 Hung was a fragrant *garland*, *new-twined* by the hands of affection.'

At a moment of such excitement, when the English soldiers march up to the church to make the Acadians prisoners, we should expect the women to be running back and forth, anxiously asking why the men had assembled so suddenly in the church. On the contrary, they are calmly and patiently waiting in the churchyard, decorating the graves of the dead, with little or no concern, apparently, for the welfare of the living. How had they found time to bring 'autumn leaves and evergreens fresh from the forest'? They certainly did not have the wreaths already prepared when they broke off so suddenly from the merrymaking at Evangeline's home. Since the churchyard scene has no real connection,—not even a reasonable one—with the incidents with which it is associated, there is all the more reason for believing that it is an adaptation from Tegnér's 'Children of the Lord's Supper.'

IV

In addition to the parallels found in the comparisons that have just been made, further evidences of Swedish influence can be drawn from certain descriptive words and phrases which suggest conditions that are peculiar to peasant life in Sweden. Among the more striking references of this kind the following may serve as illustrations: 'the thatch roofs' and the 'projecting gables'; the 'wooden latch' on the house door and the 'wooden bars on the barn doors'; the 'broad-wheeled wains' and the 'antique ploughs and harrows'; the 'horn bows' on the notary's glasses and the 'wooden shoes' of Michael the fiddler; the 'dower of the bride in flocks of sheep and in cattle.'

The theory that Part I of the 'Evangeline' is largely a product of Swedish influence is supported, not only by internal criteria, but as well by facts that pertain to external conditions. Considered purely from the point of view of geographical location, Nova Scotia and Sweden might be said to lie in the same latitude, the actual difference amounting to only a few degrees at the most. This difference in latitude was probably disregarded altogether by the poet, for in thinking of the two countries he would naturally associate them only as northern countries, with northern climate, northern vegetation, and northern occupations and habits of life. Such association of thought is all the more natural to one who knows already beforehand (as the poet probably did) that the countries in question offer some unmistakable resemblances in regard to their topography. In general outline Nova Scotia, like Sweden (or more correctly, Scandinavia), is a peninsula, washed on many sides by ocean, gulf, and bay. And of both of the countries it is true that the mainland consists for the most part of jagged chains of hills, relieved by numerous lakes and here and there by stretches of meadow land. Thick forests of pine, oak, and hemlock cover vast areas of the land. The poet's knowledge of the facts would enable him, while writing the 'Evangeline,' to utilize directly his recollections of characteristic features in Swedish landscape by simply attributing the same features to Nova Scotia, thus giving to the poem an ideally rugged background and surrounding it with a genuinely northern atmosphere.

A study of that period of the poet's life which comprises the ten years immediately preceding the composition of the 'Evangeline' discloses facts regarding his mental activity, which are in perfect accord with the views and arguments set forth in the foregoing paragraphs. During these ten years the poet's mind was, in one way or another, occupied almost constantly with Scandinavian subjects. For a time (1838-1840) he contemplated a series

of ballads or an epic poem on the Discovery of America by the Norsemen. The first record of this plan is found in a journal entry of May 3, 1838: 'I have been looking at the old Northern Sagas, thinking of a series of ballads or romantic poems on the deeds of the first bold viking who crossed to this western world, with storm-spirits and devil machinery under water. This seems to be an introduction. I will dream more of this.' About a year later (May 24, 1839), he mentions in his diary a visit by his friend Felton, and says that he had told him of his plan of a heroic poem on the Discovery of America by the Northmen. Again, after a few moments (September 17, 1839), he speaks of his intention of publishing a poem with a Scandinavian subject, 'Hakon Jarl,' but this poem never appeared. However, his original plan of a heroic poem on a viking's voyage to America was carried out the following year when he wrote his 'Skeleton in Armour.'

Longfellow was well pleased with the poem, for he believed, he said, that he had 'succeeded in giving the whole a Northern air' and in making it 'striking and perhaps unique in conception.' In order to attain this twofold aim he had undoubtedly made a more or less careful study of certain representative works from the Scandinavian literature, apart from the 'Northern Sagas' which he mentioned some two years before the completion of his ballad. From a quoted remark in one of his notices about the ballad, we learn, for example, that he had read at least a part of the voluminous work, 'Atlantica,' by the Swedish poet Olof Rudbeck. His acquaintance with Nyerup and Rahbek's collection of old Danish folksongs probably dates from the same time, for, from this collection he made a translation of the 'Elected Knight' only a year later, or the same year in which he translated Tegnér's 'Children of the Lord's Supper.' In 1844 he published a translation of another Danish poem, 'Childhood,' and this was followed, in 1845, by an original poem, 'To an Old Danish Song Book.' A collection known as 'The Poets and Poetry of Europe,' and edited by Longfellow, was published the same year. To this important collection Longfellow himself contributed some biographical sketches of representative Swedish authors, a brief survey of the language and literature, together with his own translations of Swedish and Danish poems. After he thus, for so many

1. Compare Longfellow's letter to his father, Dec. 13, 1840.

2. Olof Rudbeck, Swedish naturalist and poet, was born in 1630 and died in 1702. The work on which his fame chiefly rests is his '*Atland eller Manheim*,' popularly called *Atlantikan*, a work of two thousand five hundred folio pages, in which the author tries to prove by arbitrary etymologies and fanciful parallelisms that everything that Plato says about the legendary country '*Atlantis*' has reference to Sweden.

3. The Danish title of the collection is, '*Danske Viser fra Middelalderen*.'

4. The poem is by Jens Immanuel Baggesen, the title in the original being, '*Da jeg var lille*.'

years, had been actively engaged in studying, translating, editing, and, in a sense, even producing Scandinavian (mostly Swedish) literary works, and while his mind was still under the fresh influence of impressions which must have resulted from such activity, he began writing the 'Evangeline.' It was therefore most natural, one might even say necessary, that the same impressions should be reflected in the poem.

Ever since the time of his visit to Sweden (1835) Longfellow had, in all probability, entertained a thought of putting into poetic form some of his recollections of rural life in that country. This we may infer to be the underlying thought in the following remark:¹ 'There is something patriarchal still lingering about rural life in Sweden, which renders it a fit *theme* for *song*. Almost primeval simplicity reigns over that Northern land, almost primeval solitude and stillness.' Perhaps he had waited all these years for conditions to arise under which he might most favorably carry out his thought of a *song* on the above *theme*. If so, his opportunity was now to suggest itself from the records relating to the history of the Acadians. In constructing the historical background for the 'Evangeline,' the poet must have discovered very early that there existed a real kinship between the Acadians and the Swedes, since the Acadians were descendants of the Normans and since the ancestry of the latter, in turn, goes back to the Northmen or Scandinavians who already in the ninth century invaded the coasts of France and there founded the duchy of Normandy. As soon as he had learned of this ancestral relationship, therefore, he could with perfect consistency bestow on the Acadians whatever he had found to be the distinguishing features in the life, the character, and the traditions of the Swedish peasants.

If we agree that the poet has thus successfully allowed a Swedish spirit to pervade the first part of the poem without at the same time depriving it of its American character and identity, then we must also agree that he has been particularly happy in selecting for the final scene of the story a locality in whose early history the destinies of the Swedish nation are closely interwoven with those of the American. The scene of the final meeting between the lovers, as we know, is laid at an almshouse in Philadelphia, hence in the immediate vicinity of the very spot where the Swedes had planted their first colony, in 1638, and so close to their church that from this place Evangeline could hear the singing of Swedish hymns as she entered the door of the almshouse:

'Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets, deserted and silent,
Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of the almshouse.

1. Compare 'The Legend of Frithiof,' in the North American Review for July, 1837.

Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors, cooled by the east
wind,
Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the belfry of Christ
Church,
While, intermingled with these, across the meadows were wafted
Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in their church at
Wicaco.'

GENESIS

By HARRY L. BAKER

IN the huge gloom of heartless forests old,
Æons before the miracle of man,
Vast desolation slept, or crashing ran
Tremendous bulks of nature's aimless mould
Through startled bush, while breathing caverns cold
Hid uncouth monsters under nameless ban.
Yet gradual in that soulless gloom began
A stir of sentience divinely bold:
Noble in ignobility there came
Rude prophecies of men that cunning fought
For hard survival in life's desperate game,
And in God's calm and timeless patience wrought
His consummation — till one stood aflame,
Touched by the golden sunrise of a thought!

THE CULT OF PIERROT

BY MILTON BRONNER

THE gods of the aristocracy, given time, degenerate from their lofty estate into the playthings of the masses. Heine, more or less blasphemously, has told us something of this tragedy. The opposite process still awaits its adequate historian, for in this world it sometimes happens that as the commoner of yesterday may become the noble of to-day, so the plaything of the mob is transformed into the cult of the aristocratic intellectuals. There is a startling reversal in form. The subject of the laughter and jeers of the canaille becomes the thing above all others to which poets and painters devote some of their best thoughts and work. The rude earth, the tattered rags, drop away from the being, and it is clothed anew and becomes a glorified subject of picture and song.

So with Pierrot — white Pierrot — and his cult. To-day he is an aristocrat of the aristocrats, the beloved of French poets and painters and actors, tracing his ancestry back for two thousand years and more, to the days when imperial Rome ruled the fair Italian lands, and remoter still, when Athens was the light of the world. To give the full history of Pierrot and his kindred of the pantomime, it would be necessary to pore over tomes written by Italian scholars, annals of the skipping harlequin, ancestry books displaying the genealogy of laughter-producing punch. The search would take us far into times and lands when Harlequin and Scaramouch were ennobled, when Harlequins themselves wrote elaborate treatises on their art. For the white face of Pierrot we would have to go back to those ancient Greek days when the players wore masks of wood and leather. For the characters themselves we would have to delve into the dubious histories of the Roman mimi and pantomimi, the one class setting forth comedy, the other tragedy. All this is very far away from the verses of a Gautier, a DeBauville, a Cattulle Mendès, an English Dowson, a Canadian Carman.

And yet, what would you? Before his cult, Pierrot was very human, very humble, a thing for men and boys to laugh at. The mimi,— those buffoons, who cultivated the art of mimicry, who were the entertainers of gay parties, and — singular contrast — attended funerals where they mimicked the person, the language, and the gestures of the departed,— were among the ancestors of Pierrot. So too, and strange to say, were the pantomimi, children of the tragic muse, but mute, but voiceless, save for the

gesture, and the dance set to music. Indeed, said one: 'There very nod speaks, their hands talk, and their fingers have a voice.' It is not difficult to see in this the beginning of pantomime. Thus far in our hero's family tree we are safe. A little farther and speculation begins. Pierrot, looking backward, says Harlequin and Punchinello are of the most ancient origin, indeed the originals of pantomime. Some of his historians go farther and trace all the leading personages of the pantomime back to the pagan mysteries. It is simple when you know how. Thus, they presto! and Harlequin is Mercury, with his rod to make himself invisible; Columbine is Psyche, the soul; the old man, Pantaloon, is Charon; the clown is Momus, the buffoon of heaven. Waxing eloquent these historians will even point out to you that our English 'zany' and the Italian 'zanni' alike trace back to the Latin Sannio of whom the grave Cicero wrote: 'For what has more of the ludicrous than Sannio? who with his mouth, his face imitating every motion, with his voice indeed, with all his body provokes laughter?' Well, we will grant Pierrot his mimi and pantomimi, his Harlequin and Punchinello. His other ancestors seem to date from more recent days. They belong to the Italy of myriad, rival, fighting mediæval cities and states, of territories represented in the popular mind, and for all time in your Dante, by the well-defined characteristics of the indwellers.

The *Commedia dell' Arte*, that tells the story. Here in this impromptu comedy of the renaissance of Italy were developed those other well-known ancestors and cousins of our hero. It was simple enough. A subject being selected, the comedians from Bergamo, from Florence, from Venice, from Naples, from where you will, so it be in Italy, undertook a performance improvising, as they proceeded, a dialogue suitable to the action and the characters they had to present, and the people they had to please. You may be sure they copied the wild sons, the duped, decrepit fathers, the dishonest servants of Terence and Plautus. Crowds being what crowds of the canaille always are, even in the high-hearted, fantastical, renaissance Italy, you may be sure the jests were often broad and the byplay obscene. However that may be, the characters began to take definite form. Harlequin, borrowing the black mask traditionally designed for him by no less a man than Michelangelo, came to stand for the indolence and the stupidity of Bergamo. The ancient dotards of the old Latin plays became the Venetian Pantaloon and the Bolognese Doctor. Milan supplied that arch knave Scapin. Naples, home to this day of the lively, the emotional, the humorous Italian, supplied Pulcinella and Scaramouch; Rome, Calandrino; Calabria a booby. Isabelle, Columbine, Harlequine, the soubrette, the courtesan, the what you will, come directly from the pages of Terence and Plautus. So much for extempore comedy.

Then came Ruzzante, actor and author of the mid-sixteenth century. Considerable of a man, this servant of the people! With an eye to satire, to ridicule, you may be sure he perceived the possibilities of holding up one city or state for the laughter of another. Pantomime became more sophisticated. Plots became firmer; lines became settled. Less was left to the inventive powers of the actor. Moreover, each character was definitely supplied with the costumes and the dialect of the particular city or province from whence he came.

So, the necessary historic ground having been cleared, we come to Pierrot's more recent forbears, all of them Italian,—Bertoldo, Pagliaccio, Gros Guillaume, Pedrolino. There are more, but these will suffice. As with Pierrot in later years, they were not without their singers. Bertoldo, for instance, was celebrated in song and story by that Bolognese improvisatore, Giulio Cæsare Croce, who sang in public places, accompanying himself on his stringed instrument.

In 1570,—memorable year, Pagliaccio made his bow, Pagliaccio, bitterly translated 'stupid wit,' enshrined in Salvator Rosa's prose thus: 'He is clothed in a loose dress, fastened by enormous buttons, a white flexible hat, wears a mask, and is smothered in flour.' You begin to see the family likeness?

Enter lastly Pedrolino, Pierrot's father, always represented as a faithful clown whose business was to watch the wife of his master when the latter was asleep or away from home. He wore a long white smock, a straw hat, and carried a large stick, was, in fact, the Italian peasant even as his son Pierrot, 'little Peter,' who wandered across the frontier into France, was at first simply the Gallic peasant,—by adoption.

In France his movements at the start are shrouded in obscurity. Then he makes his bow in Molière. At last he has made himself at home. The land of his adoption has become his true country and the Gallic fancy busies itself with his development. More obscurity. And then at last Pierrot, a full-fledged Frenchman, made his début in pantomime at the famous little Theatre des Funambules in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Thanks to the genius of the actor Debureau, the drawings of Willette, the painting of Gerome, and the verse of the various and sundry poets, Pierrot has become a veritable aristocrat of art and literature, all thought of his humble origin lost and forgotten.

Debureau presented him to society and he has ranked high ever since. According to the gospel of Debureau, Pierrot was sometimes generous. He was good by fits and starts; sometimes he was a thief or a miser. If he became rich, his natural faults soon made him poor again. The actor,

by sheer force of his talents, revived the pantomimic art, captivated the imagination of men of genius, and caused poets to write Pierrot plays. Baudelaire, the sombre and often bitter, contrasting the Pierrot of Debureau with the English clown, rhapsodically spoke of the former as 'pale as the moon, mysterious as silence, supple and dumb as the serpent, erect and long as the gallows.' The very history of the theatre in which Debureau developed Pierrot was written in extenso by Jules Janin and Champfleury. Paul Legrand also took a part in play writing, and Pierrot became a type of carelessness and improvidence, without a sou in his purse, without any dress other than that he wears, to face the summer sun or the winter cold. He is always cheerful, animal, licentious, childish, irresponsible. He is an infant with a total lack of conscience and a total want of responsibility. Voila! 'Tis a far cry from the clowning of the mimi of Cicero's day. But the progress of Pierrot is not yet completed. The part is taken by women and so is sentimentalized. Enter, then, Theophile Gautier, he of the red vest and the cameo verses, as poet laureate of Pierrot. In 'Pierrot Postum,' he produced one of his prettiest and most ingenious fancies, revealing as only a true poet could the inherent childishness of Pierrot. The lad, as young as spring and as old as time, has been persuaded that he is dead and bewails his own demise. He ponders over the sadness of fate and in the fact of his own death discovers the answer for that wondrous riddle,— why his face is so white! Alas for the poor lad! Pierrot sighs and wears mourning for himself, throws flowers on his own tomb, and laments his loss of the enjoyment of the things of this world. Nor does he stop there. With great labor and care he writes his own epitaph, although truthful fellow that he is, he admits that he was an idler and good for naught, who wasted his precious days of flowers and sun in frivolity,— and worse. Gautier's work done, Théodore de Banville, who saw life as a stage with ballets and magic transformations, became Pierrot's singer in the one-act verse comedy, 'The Kiss.' Pierrot and Urgèle, a fairy, comprise the dramatis personæ. The scene is laid in the dense woods of Veroflay. Urgèle, under the spell of enchantment, is crippled and bent with the weight of a hundred bitter years, and is clothed in a coarse brown cape rudely mended with patches. Her only hope of a release from the spell is to secure the first kiss of a pure young being. Pierrot, very young and very ingenuous, enters the woods on a lark. He bears a basket amply supplied with food and wine, but is lonesome for a human comrade with whom to share his little feast. Of course he espies Urgèle, of course he seats her, cares for her tenderly, feeds her. Of course his young sympathies are enlisted; of course Urgèle asks him for something which can cure her of her ills, something that he has. Pierrot promises, Urgèle doubts,

and Pierrot swears. It is a terrifying oath! He swears by the swan, his brother, and the snow, his sister! Thus entrapped, the demand is made that he kiss her. Here's a pretty situation for a pretty Pierrot! What, kiss that ugly wrinkled face?

'A kiss? Zounds, madame, a demand like that is rudish.
I really feel myself a prey to movements prudish.'*

But a promise is a promise; an oath is binding. Pierrot with a grimace, bestows the boon, and the drone, as you, sophisticated and wise, have long ago foreseen, becomes the young Beauty, dazzling in her robe, the color of the moon, embroidered with silver, and sparkling with precious stones and like the sky, begemmed with glistening fire. Urgèle prepares to depart, but Pierrot bids her stay, reminding her of the service he had performed. Half persuaded, the gentle fairy lingers and some pretty love making and day dreaming ensues:

Urgèle.— Thou shalt be a shepherd.

Pierrot.— The cattle thou shalt keep.

Urgèle.— I'll wash thy white habits in the river deep.

Pierrot.— And we'll be white like the swans that swim side by side
Upon the lake's mirror, and on the silver tide.

Urgèle.— We'll both be white.

Pierrot.— White like an avalanche of snow.

Urgèle.— White like the iridescent glacier, hanging low.

Pierrot.— I take, embrace, and hold thee mine, entirely!

Urgèle.— Dear Pierrot!

But sadness is the portion of Pierrot and his love. The fairies call upon their sister and the lad is left alone to dream and to mourn:

'I'll hang myself. I'll find a leafy tree to suit,
And install myself in the branches like a fruit.

But yet, why should one see Pierrot hung? To be
Or not to be, that is the question. Certainly,
The master is myself. Then, not so cold, it's plain
When once I shall have gone I'll not return again.'

De Banville set the fashion. From this time on Pierrot was no longer the foolish clown, the mere fun-maker with the white face and the painted

*Translation by William Theodore Peters, in "The Quarter Latin"—1296.

lips. To the poets he became the pretty youth, with beauty such as would set a maid's heart aflutter. He was no longer the mere man in motley. In art Willette in his "Pauvre Pierrot" gave a thousand drawings of the character, fixing it for years to come. The younger artists, feeling the French influence, were quick to follow; Aubrey Beardsley drew his Pierrot; Jules Cheret displayed him in his Parisian posters. In the United States E. B. Bird, Will Bradley, and Claude F. Bragdon showed the uses to which the character could be put. In opera R. Leoncavallo made Europe applaud his 'Pagliacci' in which thrillingly the pantomime artists engaged in tragedy. But the point of interest for us here is not the music, not the plot. It is the viewpoint from which Punchinello and the rude clown are regarded. The keynote is struck in the beautiful prologue where the clown informs us he is.

"Not to prate, as once of old,
 That the tears of the actor are false, unreal,
 That his sighs and cries, and the pain that is told,
 He has no heart to feel!
 No! No! Our author to-night a chapter will borrow
 From life with its laughter and sorrow.
 Is not the actor a man with a heart like you?
 So 'tis for men that our author has written,
 And the story he tells you is — true!" *

And this point — the fusing of the character and the man, the real feelings of the one under the playing of the other — is not allowed to be forgotten even at the crisis when Punchinello's heart is breaking at the discovery of the unfaithfulness of his wife, Columbine, of the opera:

'Courage, my heart!
 Thou art not a man; thou'rt but a jester!
 On with the motley, the paint and the powder,
 The people pay thee, and want their laugh, you know,
 If Harlequin thy Columbine has stolen,
 Laugh, Punchinello! The world will cry "bravo!"
 Go hide with laughter thy tears and thy sorrow,
 Sing and be merry, playing thy part,
 Laugh, Punchinello, for the love that is ended,
 Laugh for the sorrow that is eating thy heart.'

*Translated by F. E. Weatherby — Oliver Ditson Company.

The sorrow that is eating his heart,— this is the new note in the Pierrot cult, as displayed by the Frenchmen of the past few decades, as truly as the Italian reveals it in the case of Punchinello, Catulle Mendès plays with it in his cynical way, and we find one volume adorned with a picture of Pierrot, with a silver nimbus about his head, dangling from a lamp post, a position in which he is discovered when the curtain goes up on ‘chand d’ habits.’ In still another farce Mendès plays with the idea of Pierrot haunted for the murder of his wife.

More pleasing, and leading us to the lands of faerie, are the pastels of the other men. Paul Leclercq,* for instance, in ‘A Story in White,’ tells us how white Pierrot, in his white bed, dreams; tells Columbine sleeping near him, of her tiny slipper size of a rose leaf, which seems by the dead hearth to be awaiting Santa Claus. Alas! for Pierrot he has fallen on evil days and is very poor. He has no money; only the snowflakes which are dismally falling, falling outside, and the snow is money that does not pass current anywhere. Pierrot would fain borrow a few golden rays from the moon, but she, the money lender of lovers and Pierrots, is so far away! So Pierrot seizes his guitar and wanders away across the housetops, seeking a present for his Columbine. He finds nothing but a black cat, and cold, soot-covered, and weary, he returns to his room. But Columbine is gone, and in a corner he espies a black hat, such as is worn neither by Pierrots nor poets. So white Pierrot goes away,—away to seek forgetfulness, and comes back at last to die, to die at Columbine’s grave.

It is all very simple and very pretty and very Parisian,— worlds away from the clowning of the *commedia dell’ arte*.

Paul Margueritte, to whom the subject was also one of fascination, also wrote a little prose fancy,— ‘The Death of Pierrot,’ in which, in a lunar garden, white Pierrot and Columbine all in pink exchange vows. And then Columbine dies and Pierrot, in despair, takes her lifeless form into his arms, and leaps into the waters of the lake shining blue under the moon.

Leaving France now, we cross the channel to see whether perchance the Pierrot cult has come there into that rude England whose clowns so offended Baudelaire. If we theorized about it we would imagine that the singer of Pierrot would be one of those young poets whose inspiration was had in the Parisian cabarets haunted by Paul Verlaine and his fellows. And in this our theory would be correct, for the English celebrator of Pierrot is none other than the decadent poet, Ernest Dowson, who after giving the world a sheaf of little poems notable for their exquisite form, their minor lilt of melancholy, their feeling that life is so fleeting and roses so fragile, passed away almost unknown. It is true his name has been revived by the

*See “Pastels in Prose”—Harpers.

championing of his fellow decadent, Arthur Symons, and by the reissue in recent times of two different editions of his complete poems. For us the point of interest lies in his little dramatic phantasy, 'The Pierrot of the Minute.'

It is not difficult to see that the poet was influenced largely by his memories of 'The Kiss.' As in that one-act piece, there are but two characters, Pierrot and an immortal, Dowson's being a moon-maiden. As in 'The Kiss,' Pierrot, laden with a basket and seeking adventures, comes to a secluded spot, the mainspring of his wandering being a parchment on which is written:

'He loves to-night who never loved before;
Who ever loved, to-night shall love once more.
Who would adventure to encounter Love
Must rest one night within this hallowed grove.
Cast down thy lilies, which have led thee on,
Before the tender feet of Cupidon.'

Weary of the solitude, Pierrot muses over his past joys in rout and masquerade, the while soft music plays somewhere in the darkness, wooing him to thoughts of what this mysterious 'love' may be, and to a sense for the first time of his lack of companions:

'Why should I be so musical and sad?
I wonder why I used to be so glad?
In single glee I chased blue butterflies,
Half butterfly myself, but not so wise,
For they were twain, and I was only one,
Ah me! how pitiful to be alone.
My brown birds told me much, but in mine ear
They never whispered this; learned it here:
The soft wood sounds, the rustlings in the breeze
Are but the stealthy kisses of the trees.
Each flower and fern in this enchanted wood
Leans to her fellow, and is understood;
The eglantine, in loftier station set,
Stoops down to woo the maidly violet.
In gracile pairs the very lilies grow;
None is companionless except Pierrot.'

Dreaming of new things, the pretty Pierrot is found by the moon-maiden, who would fain save him from the fate of those who love her kind hopelessly and helplessly, but he awakes and begs her to read that portion of the parchment which he could not decipher, and which proved to be this warning:

‘ Au petit Trianon, at night’s full moon,
Mortal, beware the kisses of the moon!
Whoso seeks her she gathers like a flower
He gives a life, and only gains an hour.’

Good warning, forsooth, but Pierrot is Pierrot!

‘ Bear me away to thine enchanted bower,
All of my life I venture for an hour.’

So she dances for him while the music plays and —

“ Love is his lady for a summer’s night.”
Nothing loath Pierrot begins wooing:
“ Who art thou, lady? Breathe a name to me,
That I may tell it like a rosary.
Thou, whom I sought, dear Dryad of the trees,
How art thou designate; art thou heartsease? ”

She grants him a boon and he receives the cold kiss of the moon-maiden, which, with all its ice, thrills him with passion. He longs to be her scholar in the school of love, and then ensues the catechism,— one of the daintiest things this young Englishman was destined to write:

The Lady:

What is Love?
Is it a folly,
Is it mirth, or melancholy?
Joys above,
Are there many, or not any?
What is Love?

Pierrot:

If you please,
A most sweet folly!

Full of mirth and melancholy:
 Both of these!
 In its sadness worth all gladness,
 If you please!

The Lady:

Prithee, where
 Goes Love a-hiding?
 Is he long in his abiding
 Anywhere?
 Can you bind him when you find him;
 Prithee, where?

Pierrot:

With spring days
 Love comes and dallies:
 Upon the mountains, through the valleys
 Lie Love's ways.
 Then he leaves you and deceives you
 In spring days.

One rather fancies this is work like unto that written by the men who were young when Elizabeth was nearing the grave. As in 'The Kiss,' with the approach of the dawn, after more pretty lovemaking, the immortal departs for her skiey home, while Pierrot, sunk in slumber, dreams of beauty. The little phantasy is all compact of graces, one of which simply demands lengthy quotation, first because of itself, and next because the reviewers of the poems are so apt to overlook this little interlude so much in the manner of Austin Dobson when at his best:

The Lady:

What am I, then?

Pierrot:

A most divine Marquise!
 Perhaps that attitude hath too much ease.
 (*Passes her.*)
 Ah, that is better! To complete the plan,
 Nothing is necessary save a fan.
 Cool is the night, what needs it?

Pierrot:

Madame, pray
Reflect, it is essential to our play.

The Lady (taking a lily):

Here is my fan!

Pierrot:

So, use it with intent:
The deadliest arm in beauty's armament!

The Lady:

What do we next?

Pierrot:

We talk!

The Lady:

But what about?

Pierrot:

We quiz the company and praise the rout;
Are polished, petulant, malicious, sly,
Or what you will, so reputations die.
Observe the Duchess in Venetian lace,
With the red eminence.

The Lady:

A pretty face!

Pierrot:

For something tarter set thy wits to search —
' She loves the churchman better than the church.

The Lady:

Her blush is charming: would it were her own!

Pierrot:

Madame is merciless!

The Lady:

Is that the tone ?

Pierrot:

The very tone: I swear thou lackest naught.
Madame was evidently bred at court.

The Lady:

Thou speakest glibly: 'tis not of thine age.

Pierrot:

I listened much, as best becomes a page.

The Lady:

I like thy court but little —

Pierrot:

Hush! the Queen!
Bow, but not low — thou knowest what I mean.

The Lady:

Nay, that I know not!

Pierrot:

Though she wear a crown,
'Tis from La Pompadour one fears a frown.

The Lady:

Thou art a child: thy malice is a game.

Pierrot:

A most sweet pastime; scandal is its name.

The Lady:

Enough, it wearies me.

Pierrot:

Then, rare Marquise,
Desert the crowd to wander through the trees.

So much for France and England. Crossing the ocean we now find that the cult of Pierrot has come to America. Again theorizing about the matter, we would imagine the young poet who took up the Pierrot theme would be one thoroughly conversant with the French authors, one in sympathy with the subjects and the styles they love. Again our theory is correct and we have in Mr. Bliss Carman such a poet. It is not intended that the inference shall follow that he is an imitate devoid of originality. Far from it! However, just as the young Canadian heartily joined in the symbolist movement, inaugurated by Belgian and French poets and dramatists, at the same time giving his symbolistic poems a decided impress of his own individuality, so too his Pierrot is a new creation. We have dealt with Pierrot clownish, Pierrot ingenuous, Pierrot fantastical, and Pierrot poetical. We now have Pierrot the bohemian, the vagabond. It is neither more nor less than we would expect from the singer of the joys of the road, of the quiet pipe and glass of good red wine. Gone from this Pierrot's existence the rude follies of an earlier day. The fanciful wooing of moon-maidens is not within the sphere of his experience. He is not as naively innocent as the Pierrot of Gautier. This Pierrot has red blood in his veins. He knows his world, he appreciates the good things in it, he desires real women with whom to fall in love.

' A street that's neither grand nor poor;*
A number quite unknown to fame;
Stairs; then a door without a name;
Then lodgings where content is sure;

' An air of luring quietude;
A littered table; notes and scraps
Of writing — poetry perhaps;
Mirror and window panes smoke-blued;

' Pictures; a shelf of books; a tray
Of glasses, and a plate or two;
Some silver old; some journals new;
Roses; a dancing girl in clay;'

' A shrine; a béret; one sabot;
Wine, cigarettes, a mask, a fan,
A Persian rug; a deep divan;
Repose and joy. Here lives Pierrot.'

*The Smart Set, August, 1901.

Here is it Pierrot dreams; here he woos and wins; here he realizes his ideal!

‘ When old romance and moonlight lie
On every city square and tree,
The moonflower, Pierrette, is she;
Her lover moon, Pierrot, am I.’

So much for the creations of those Pierrots of the world — the artists; Pierrots whose work always falls so much below their standard, but who, if they be real Pierrots, joy in the labor.

‘ The artist, after all, is a Pierrot.
A Pierrot of the minute, naif, clever,
But Art is back of him, She lives forever! ’

WHERE ROMANTICISM IS STILL IN FLOWER

BY O. H. RYSTAD

DID you ever visit Sotersdal, that beautiful little valley of Norway? No? Well, then, you have missed something — missed one of the most romantic places on earth.

Sotersdal is a deep, narrow valley, with high and steep mountains on both sides, a few grand waterfalls, and a romantic people. Tradition tells the tale, now almost wholly forgotten, that the people are of Scotch descent. Whether this is but a tale never will be known, for time has drawn its darkest veil over Sotersdal's early history.

There was a time when the people were hardly ever known outside of their own little beautiful valley. Now hotels have been built, here and there, which can be reached either by the newly built railroad or by the restless little steamboats skimming along the waters of the beautiful fjords.

The people of Sotersdal live a highly emotional life. Romanticism was here at its height until a few years ago. It still reigns supreme though gradually being displaced by the more prosaic and practical side of modern life.

The young people, especially, live themselves into a life of dreams, and this dream-life often finds its expression in poetry and song. The Sotersdal youth is so full of longing, youthful sadness and a romantic outlook on life that the energy of life — the staying qualities — frequently receive a more or less permanent injury. His youthful bosom is heaving with sighs, 'o'er the grand old mountains,' and he feels a deep sadness — yes, even melancholy — because he cannot live in the midst of a life so rich in promise, beyond the mountain and the sea. But there is also a spirit of gayety and youthful pleasure. There is over it all a dreamy atmosphere in which imagination has grown strong on the memories of old. And this is not strange when it is remembered that every hill and dale, every rock and deep ravine, from the deepest valley to the highest towering mountain, has its tales from a long departed age. Such tales and stories live from generation to generation, coloring and enriching the imagination of the people.

But where the imagination has grown so strong it needs some form of

expression. Here it assumes the form of tales and stories, poetry and song; the former more or less weird and fantastic, the latter possessing considerable lyric beauty.

My old grandmother, who some years ago passed away into gentler spheres, related to me, once, the following story:

‘At the upper end of the last “fjord” of the valley is a waterfall of immense height. The water dashes itself to foam as it comes thundering down the precipitous mountain side.

‘This waterfall, like every other fall, river, brook, and fjord, has a story to tell.

‘In the remote past there lived a young man, as serf, on a farm close by. He was an athlete, strong and handsome. His name was Reiar (Riär). Young Reiar had fallen in love with a young girl, a daughter of one of the well-to-do farmers of the valley.

‘There was a wedding on one of the neighboring farms, and Reiar was there. The festivities continued for a week, during which Baccus reigned supreme. A quarrel and a fight now and then served to give variety to the joyous affair. On the last day our young friend Reiar was deeply insulted by some of the more well-to-do young fellows. He, but a serf, and expect to get a girl like Rannei (the girl’s name). Better ’twas for such a dog to sneak home to his lowly cottage at once, etc. Reiar turned pale. The taunting remarks stung him more now than ever. With set teeth he pulled out his long knife and stabbed the insolent fellow.

‘In those days there was no definite form of legal procedure. However, Reiar was at once put to a kind of trial for murder, and sentenced by the people to cross the roaring waterfall three times on horseback. If he came out alive he was to be a free man.

‘Reiar secured a young, well-built, gray steed, and the ordeal soon began.

‘He was to cross the fall half way up that steep, almost perpendicular mountain wall. Here the fall was hardly anything but a heavy, hissing mass of spray and foam. Once he crossed, turned, and stopped to steady the faithful gray. Could he do it again? There was nothing but to do or die, and — once more he shot through like an arrow. Another pause.

‘A hundred feet or more, high up, stood his lovely girl watching, and with arms extended towards heaven she implored the Almighty’s assistance. Again she turned to get a better view, and as she did so her foot struck a stone which at once went bounding over rocks and cliffs. The noise startled the now so nervous gray. It made but the slightest move, but it proved fatal. Over the precipice came horse and man together, and in a few minutes were

seen dashed against the pitiless rock some five hundred feet below. And Rannei, seeing what she had done, had nothing more to live for. Throwing herself over the precipice she was picked up but an unrecognizable mass, lying side by side with her ill-fated lover on the cold rock at the foot of the mountain.

'The waterfall has since been known as "Reiaarsfossen" (the Riar fall).'

I remarked above that the people possess songs and ballads of considerable lyric beauty. They have sprung from the people, and reflect its thought and sentiment both in word and melody. It is very interesting to note how, as the people have reached a higher and higher intellectual plane, these songs have changed too. The tone has become more refined and more subjective.

A generation or more since, most of these songs had an epic color. They were frequently full of sarcasm, scorn, and defiance. Now a gentler muse has come to stay. Love is the most fertile subject for these self-made poets, but nature also receives a tribute now and then.

Translated into another language these songs become a mere jingle. They are so peculiarly a product of the people that it seems well-nigh impossible to dress them in a new garb without destroying their native beauty. A thorough acquaintance with the life of the people is absolutely necessary in order to appreciate the content, form, and melody of their poetry.

I shall, however, attempt, for the benefit of those who cannot read Norwegian, to translate a few stanzas.

'Twas this made heaven and earth look fair,
I love her and she loved me.
The flowers' sweet breath ladened the air,
And the moon peeped over the lea.

' My pleasant summers are passed forever,
To what or whence I shall know, oh, never!
My pleasant summers so soon passed by
As the dew wiped off when the sun gets high! '

The young fellow who goes out into the world with high hopes and grand expectations receives the following stanza from his sweetheart.

' Farewell, farewell, ah, may fortune meet you!
Farewell though never I more may see you!
But wherever you in the world may go,
Forget not her, for she loves you so! "

Again, it may be a young couple whom the parents try to bring to reason! Then the young man sings,—

‘ They sell their children for earthly treasure,
And love for money exchange at pleasure.
So may youth grow weary and dark and cold,
And life’s sacred treasure is forever sold.’

Or it may be a young maiden whose life is slowly ebbing away. The sun is setting, and the beautiful rays crown the towering mountain tops with crimson and gold.

‘ Beautiful sun! beyond the mount earth’s gentlest, warmest friend,
I soon shall bid my last good night — too soon my life must end.
Anon and I must go to rest, my life its course has run,
And never more awake to see the dawn, the morning sun!’

A. O. Vinje, the greatest lyric poet of Norway, once made the remark about Telemarken (a country district near Sotersdal), that its people could have supplied half the world with poets. I have sometimes thought that the same could have been said about Sotersdal. There are thousands of songs by almost as many poets. But who are the poets? With but a few exceptions none of them are known. Once in a while a few stanzas find their way into the local press, but most of them are found only on scraps of paper and on the lips of the people.

Many of the costumes and manners of old still linger in Sotersdal, though in a highly modified form. Modern thoughts and ideas are rapidly displacing the old.

The famous Danish poet, Halger Drachman, pronounces Sotersdal one of the most romantic places on earth.

Of late several eminent philologists have been attracted to the valley. They say that the Norwegian language is spoken here in its purest form.

In the upper part of this valley (about ninety English miles from the nearest city) lives the rising young poet, Gunnar Rysstad. He has already published two or three poetic verses. Of late he has taken more or less part in politics, and last fall this young man succeeded to a place in the Norwegian Storting. He is a very fluent writer. It is said that he expresses himself in writing more easily in poetry than prose.

Torgeir Björnaraa, poet, journalist, and educator, is one of the brightest

minds that Sotersdal has ever produced. His poetry, however, is of a rather melancholy tone. It is more sarcastic, at times, than Rysstad's. In general the poetry of Björnaraa makes a rather gloomy and depressing effect upon the reader's mind. Rysstad's, on the other hand, is stimulating, sweeping, defiant, and bold.

Kmisdt Rustad has lately been collecting folk songs, some of which he has published in book form.

The music of Sotersdal is as peculiar to the people as its poetry. It is often weird and fantastic and always full of imaginative fancy.

Their favorite instrument is the violin. This instrument differs somewhat from that of the ordinary kind. The neck is much shorter, and they use eight strings, four of which are of steel and run along through the base of the bridge and under the fingerboard. These four strings are also tuned somewhat differently from the four regular upper strings. This instrument is thus peculiarly adapted to the music, and the music expresses to perfection the emotional life of this poetic and romantic people.

The great master, Ole Bull, was deeply impressed with its weird beauty, and Grieg has introduced a great deal of its peculiarly national spirit into his compositions.

Many a tale and story is told how this and that selection originated, how the water nymph, for example, or some other supernatural being, first taught the fiddler how to play.

The violinist sings:

‘ When life is dragging and dark and cold,
And I am weary and sad,
I take my violin — friend of old —
And play the happy young lad.
The heart once so heavy again grows light,
And the world is beautiful, happy, and bright.’

ROBERT HERRICK

BY HARALD NIELSEN*

THE story is told about the French journalist and author Chincholle, that he had the habit of opening his letters only after months had passed, and that the labor of answering them was considerably lessened by this method, because the majority of them always proved to have attended to themselves, i.e. to have been rendered superfluous by time. A similar course is recommendable in the case of a modern literature. To open and answer its numberless writings would be beyond one's power, even with a small literature; but what concerns the deluge of talented and indifferent books publishing every year in America, the thought of writing their history seems quite out of the question.

The critic who ventures into this confusing output must be content with the most cursory survey, must be prepared to make frequent mistakes, and to have often been blind to what is of chief merit.

It is an impossibility, in this maze of modern literature, to trace a work in its historical connection, in all its ramified interrelations with literary, social, and philosophical conditions. On the other hand, neither can we see it in wholly sharp outlines, isolated and definite. It will be judged by the nearby and contemporaneous observer who is not able, on the one hand, clearly to perceive the historical conditions of which it is the outcome, nor either to consider it by itself, and purely as a work of art.

In that regard distance in space gives similar advantages to distance in time. The material is sifted, and the greater part of it is disposed of on the way, like Chincholle's letters. After books once have traveled a few thousand miles over land and sea, there will not be left much of the majority, except some pieces of intelligence, family news, gossip, etc., and a little local color.

If, on the other hand, they are fully alive, and come ashore ready to take part in human affairs, to thrill and enlighten, to enrapture, and win admirers, or to challenge criticism, one may safely conclude that they also, in their native country, belong to the few works — those it is of importance to interpret, if one wishes to understand a period or a people.

*Authorized translation, by Lee M. Hollander, Ph.D., from the Danish of the articles appearing in the March, April, and May numbers, 1907, of *Tilskueren* (Copenhagen), the leading Danish review.

That is true about Herrick's books. The foreign characteristics that make them so interesting to us do not conceal the eternally human that has the power to preserve their freshness on the long journeys, and to procure for them the citizenship of the world. It is well possible that, within the immense young literature of America, there are to be found talents equally or yet more prominent than this one. In that case one can only congratulate America; because an author like Herrick will, wherever he comes, stand comparison with the best, and tower above most.

Almost like a motto, or battle-cry, sounds the title to Herrick's first book: 'The Man Who Wins.' With that type his thoughts are ever busy. How does a man win, and — *what* does he win? From the first crude sketch, by a steady process of growth, and through continued deepening of the problem, there develops the type of the American citizen who writes his memoirs.

'The Man Who Wins' is the story in a few strokes of the man who does not win.

Jarvis Thornton, who has all the conditions for becoming a distinguished man of science, forfeits his chance when, prompted by sympathy and love, he marries Miss Elwell, herself a weak woman, requiring support and help, besides bringing into the family a father who is a stock gambler and a brother who is a spendthrift. His scientific career is ruined. He is obliged first of all to make money, and is fortunate enough to make much — he becomes a well-known physician and is in great demand, but yet he feels that he has lost. Therefore, when he becomes aware that a promising young man is about to devote himself to his daughter, he sets himself firmly against that. The man who wins does not devote his life to an exacting passion for a neurotic woman. You are the man to win: go in.

The next little book Herrick publishes is a collection of short narratives: 'Love Letters and Stories.' Just as the preceding one, this book must have made a striking impression, by reason of a certain psychological delicacy, a 'something' that was felt in some passages, and which was on a higher plane than that in which American literature generally moves. There was a hold on things which, notwithstanding imperfections, betrayed the master. Further, however, than to excellence in details he has not yet arrived. Only one of these stories, 'A Question in Art,' is drawn with a firmness of outline that makes it a little work of art, of merit, while being, at the same time, a characteristic expression for Herrick's manner of putting a problem.

It tells about a young artist, John Clayton, who has tried his hands at everything, but without steadiness, and therefore without success. A governess already in the thirties takes an interest in him, and makes it her

task to develop his talents. She incites him, helps him, first in small matters, then with his whole housekeeping, and in the course of time becomes his adviser, his manager, and finally his mistress. When he at last has gained his success, it means separation from her. The painting that is the first fully matured fruit of his abilities shows her the young, beautiful woman who has taken her place. Both he and she comprehend that she is only *one* of the victims his art will crave. The whole mysterious and perilous alchemy of art is revealed in this little story with the terseness of a formula. The most wonderful things wander into the crucible; but the occult processes demand a human life before gold will form, red and precious.

The author's mode of viewing life has become more complex than in his first formulation of the problem, where woman was simply regarded as an obstacle. Here it is conceded that she may be of help to man. He who is bent on winning may use her, but he does not attach himself to her, he passes on over her.

By letting the example be derived from the development of an artist this contention is deepened from a paradox to one of those cruel but almost incontestable truths that lead a precarious existence only because they are never fully admitted.

In his first book, then, the author has sketched the problem in naked, schematic outlines; in the second, we already find the design elaborated, wider in form and range. Yet still the form is but small, the range narrow. He feels that he needs more insight, that he must draw up more accurate and detailed plans of the ground on which the battle is to be fought, before daring to begin it. His first larger book, 'The Gospel of Freedom,' just serves us a reconnoitering expedition in above sense.

In it we find inchoate ideas and lines of movement interwoven from various sides, so that it, in so far, is more difficult to analyze than his later works.

It is a book about a woman — about the modern American woman. Miss Anthon, later Mrs. Wilbur, like Elsie in 'The Real World,' and for that matter, the typical 'modern' woman one sees described in American literature, reminds one of Ibsen's Hedda Gabler. The same instinctless intelligence, the same obstinate self-will, coupled with the weak vacillations. At the same time there are details in the description of her character that recall Nora in 'A Doll's House,' e.g. when she breaks with Wilbur and leaves him, because she feels herself 'degraded.' Indeed, she belongs to that genuinely Ibsenite type of women who are trying to become 'free,' and want to be 'understood' and 'understand.' She believes at first to have found what she wants in a marriage with a close friend, Wilbur, the man who successfully

handles capital. She recognizes, however, that the selfishness of business life does not afford nourishment for her soul, and so she betakes herself to Erard, the artist, who for years has been lying in wait for her as his sure prey — only to find there an egotism of a yet more sterile and contemptible sort. In contrast to her groping for liberty without or beyond the law, the author points to a deeper conception of freedom. 'There is no freedom, and every one is free. It is all a matter of feeling,' as Mr. Jennings says. We meet here for the first time the basic thought that pervades Herrick's art: reality is of an inner nature.

There is in Mrs. Wilbur's figure that scintillation of personality that renders her character exceedingly interesting and lifelike; but the drawing of it wavers too much in the details. The same is true about the work as a whole. It is richly faceted, replete with momentary prospects opening before us, and the flashes of thought indicative of the beginning insight of a laboring brain. There are lines connecting both with his earlier and later productions. The artist is a resumption of the Clayton type. Miss Anthon's interest in Wilbur's business plans points forward to Mrs. Droun, in 'The Memoirs of an American Citizen,' her later breaking with him reminds one of similar settlements in the same book and in 'The Common Lot.' Wilbur himself anticipates Harrington. Jennings, who talks about returning to 'the commonplace,' is continued in 'The Web of Life.' Even subordinate characters appear here in their first edition, e.g. the delightfully drawn old worthy, Mr. Anthon, akin in age and spirit to Mr. Hodden, in 'The Real World,' Mr. Wright, in 'The Common Lot,' and Farson, in 'The Memoirs.'

In regard to this manifold intersection of its lives, to this wealth of chords but touched in passing, and to resulting lack of perspicuity, this work occupies in Herrick's production the place of a switchboard, as it were, where all wires come together. One needs a practised eye to trace every issuing line to its destination — to do that presupposes a knowledge of the whole wire net that spreads above.

So far, even now, our author has shown only a rich, subtle, fascinating talent; but in 'The Web of Life' he approaches mastership. To be sure, there are also in this novel suggestions that are not worked out, strings that are only lightly touched upon, but the total impression made by it already is for that union of simplicity and wealth of detail which marks Herrick's more mature art.

The book treats about the fortunes of a young physician, Mr. Sommers, who by virtue of his abilities is destined to occupy a prominent position in the upper class milieu to which he belongs, but who is repelled by its attitude in social questions, its hardheartedness, its lack of understanding of the laboring

class, its hypocrisies, and its narrow-mindedness. He becomes disgusted and rises in revolt. Instead of following the beaten track, supported by all honorable and respectable men, as assistant surgeon to the fashionable Dr. Lindsay, and with the prospect of winning Miss Hitchcock's heart and fortune, he elects to go his own way, independent of his caste.

Thus his experiment of living with the people receives an artistic expression in his alliance with Mrs. Preston. He has learned to know her in the hospital where her husband, a debauched commercial traveler, had been brought in half dead after a drunken brawl. He becomes her helpmate and friend, and after Preston's death her protector and lover.

For her it is all her life's happiness — life itself that she is receiving. She gives him all she has, herself, her love; and in the midst of the new conditions into which she is removed she creates a happiness of love, tender, passionate, and all oblivious, which for a time pushes reality aside, lies right in the midst of it — but not of it, in its romanticism — like the little Greek temple in which they have sought shelter.

This is the kind of existence she is able to bestow upon him, and she must, therefore, with anxiety view his work and his interests, the prose of life, as that which will intervene between her and him. And finally, when she has arrived at the comprehension of the fact that 'love is not all — at least for a man,' the fatal knowledge that makes her superfluous, she prefers death. And so he finds her, one day, out there on the ice, where she has sought peace, cold and distant already, and he carries her home in his arms. 'Here was his revolt, in one cold burden of dead love.'

He knows now that this is the end of his revolt. 'He should live on, strangely enough, into many years, but not as they had tried to live, in self-made isolation. He should return to that web of life from which they had striven to extricate themselves.' And that life, with all its conditions, pre-suppositions, and obligations, from which one cannot break away, meets him in the person of Miss Hitchcock, her who in force of birth, culture, and character can give him more than a dream of love — a life in work, helpfulness and happiness.

The masculine that so gratefully distinguishes Herrick's art, in contrast to the usual feminine of modern literature, here appears for the first time fully defined. His decided individualism is broadened and laid on a more secure foundation by his recognition that man's life in society is fixed in advance, that he is conditioned and bound in good and bad, also by circumstances which he himself is not able to perceive, but which he must learn to know by own experience. Herrick does not seek to obtain interesting line and light effects by detaching a character from its natural surroundings, as so

frequently is the custom at present. And it is on this account that to him men's fortunes are not made up exclusively of the vicissitudes of their hearts. To him love signifies one of the most potent of forces, one of the manifestations in which reality reveals itself most energetically; but it is not all — not even always the very strongest.

The line of thought in this novel is drawn with a sure hand, but undue stress is not laid upon it. The book lives in one's memory as a soulful story of a happy and sad love, as the story of Alves, the tender, lovely woman, thirsting for happiness. In her living solely for love and passion, in her unresisting obedience to fate, she reminds us to a certain degree of the type of woman we know from Agnes Henningsen's* books. Among Herrick's female characters she is the most warm-blooded and loving.

'The Real World' lacks something of the ingratiating warmth that makes 'The Web of Life' such a heart-stirring book. It produces a cooler impression, and it moves more in the regions of knowledge than of feeling. On the other hand it is more broad and more profound. In it our author for the first time attains to full development as artist and as man.

'The Web of Life' was, in a manner, the story of a discovery of the real; but Herrick felt that the possibilities of the problem were not yet exhausted, that the real was yet but roughly defined, and he proposed to define it with greater precision — one may say, with a larger number of decimals — than before. Indeed, the relations with Alves bore the mark of the *unusual*. But how, and in what aspects does the world reveal itself to him who in his search follows the straight and usual way, through what illusions must *he* grope until arriving at certainty? The question is taken up from the beginning. We follow a man's life from the child to the grown man, and see how many blunders he must make, how many misconceptions he must work himself free of, before getting fast ground under his feet.

Jack Pemberton's father was a poor teacher of music who started life as a promising and talented young man, but had ruined himself by a rash marriage. His fate thus becomes Jack's first great experience of the strange stern laws that one must know, but which nevertheless no one can learn from any one else: The sight of his father lying on his deathbed — 'a grotesque figure, an irony of life, a triumph of the real' — gives him the first impulse to that quest about which the book tells.

He has already observed wonderingly that there existed two worlds, the one which all see, the dusty street, the ugly people, the bickering family, and

*Famous Danish author. Her books contain valuable and interesting contributions to the understanding of the soul-life of the modern woman. Her most important novel is 'Poland's Daughters.'

then another more perfect and precious, that world which is called up by certain books, at certain times of the day and the year. His father's life seemed in a curious fashion to have been divided between both these worlds.

After his death, Jack is quartered with his uncle, who is half farmer, half skipper. There he lives until, when half grown, he obtains his first situation as waiter in a hotel near the fishing village.

Among the guests he meets Elsie Mason, the young woman that gives him his first lesson in 'reality.' She becomes his friend, his comrade, his idol. To him she is the personification of that which he so completely lacks, and by studying her he learns to know, by winning her he captures the 'reality.'

But also otherwise, and more profoundly, she becomes his prentice years' great teacher. Through his love for her he begins to apprehend the existence of an inner, deeper reality which he never after wholly loses sight of.

"You're the first *real* person I ever knew," he spoke to himself. She looked at him wonderingly, ignorant of the bleak spiritual experience that the boy was trying to express. "The first person who is real and what you want her to be," he stammered on.'

They separate. She returns to New York, to the battlefield of rich and beautiful women; he goes to university, to make his way upward in society.

From a boy he is matured to young manhood by his first experience of love: 'The purest devotion a man ever gives to woman, the devotion of youth that asks nothing, hopes for nothing, gives all and gets little, filled him with happiness.'

The next time they meet again she has become a full-fledged woman, he a man; but again she is ahead of him. Compared with the worldly experiences and knowledge she has acquired, he is naïve. Again she fires him with her rousing battle-cry: "Don't take yourself cheaply, people will make room for you at your own estimate of size. Make that large."

This worldly wise young woman, 'whose very sympathy was mere egotism,' points to fight as inevitable, to mastership over the material world as indispensable. She enforces the importance of attaining that level of society to which one belongs. The world makes its conditions, and only within these 'the real' may be won.

Thus far she has been able to guide him; but the moment comes when their ways must part, and each follows his views as to what he thinks it worth selling himself for. She is of the opinion that wealth and power are of the highest value, and marries him who can give her both. The day she tells Jack of her resolution to marry Mr. Cushing, some remarks are made which subtly and significantly illustrate the difference between them. She is impatient and irritated because he refuses to share her point of view, and she

tries again to bully him by calling him a boy; but he no longer recognizes her superiority, he is conscious of possessing a piece of knowledge which she lacks.

“ “ You don’t know what it is to love, I believe, and perhaps never will.” ’
The vision of his childhood days rises up before him.

“ “ A feeling I have,” he explained, “ that things are always just beyond, hidden away beyond my reach. *You* stepped out from the fog, and now you will step back — people seem all alike,” he mused on, “ groping for something that will be real to them. I wonder if most of them ever find it. I thought you were different — never had to go groping in the dark, but you’re groping harder than the rest.” ’

The essence of her nature lies in the answer she makes: “ “ I suppose so,” she acknowledged, “ but I don’t feel this way often. *I see things, and I want them.*” ’

Even now he has not worked himself free of her influence, the bitterest experiences are yet in store for him. After years that for him have been filled with work and dreams about her, they meet again. She is rich and feted, but she has lost her own soul. She who before could afford to pass by his love is well content now with a substitute. She is about to throw herself away on a man to whom she is merely a handsome woman, a conquest.

When Jack surprises them by accident on the morrow of a festival, his disappointment and grief vent themselves in senseless rage. He knocks down his rival, almost kills him; for ‘ the world that had struggled into being, the world that he had created faithfully in abstinence and with longing effort, was dissolving and floating away, like the streamers of mist that swept across the sails.’

“ “ A small, weak cause for this wreck of a man’s world,” he told himself. “ A woman that would take her cheap pleasure.” ’

His youth is now past forever, and the struggles out of which mature manhood is to emerge have taken their beginning. The hardest trial is yet awaiting him; for the disappointment he has undergone proves to be a dangerous tempter. The passions his will hitherto has kept in abeyance rise bolder and stronger after that crisis. He sees Elsie in a new light. There are treasures of voluptuousness in that woman, and he feels he can obtain her, if but he himself is willing. He had only overestimated her. ‘ It was but a boy’s dream, the other world of restraint and noble desires,— the life of the soul. The only world — real or unreal — was the world that touched these sharp senses.’

Weakened by this dangerous dismal scepticism, he is forced to a last encounter with Elsie, now a fully developed, tempting woman. Unscrupulously

she steers toward her aim to win him — him whom she had seen before her eyes become a man, in whom she has a share, and in whose heart she knows there is yet a place for her. Her beauty that appeals to his senses, the memories containing all his youth's dream, passions repressed these many years, his doubts about the benefit of self-denial — they all are her allies. He is about to succumb. The sensuous glow of her body envelops him. But half instinctively he resists, and we learn in a masterly description how he in these feverish moments gradually arrives at clearness about himself. 'Why fight for things unseen? Why not take what was within his hands, the delights he had thirsted after. In infinitely small units of time he again ran over long trains of thought.

Imperceptibly her face faded, and she besought him with her eyes but not to fail her (this appeal *awoke the old visions of his youth*, the woman's face was another's. This was the appeal of despair, of defeat. For the first time he saw this *other*, and the vision of it stayed his heart. He opened his arms and staggered back. For the first time he experienced the feeling of having a will, almost amounting to a physical sensation, like the lifting of a vast dead weight.

To the desperate words passionately flung out by her he has but the answer: "I cannot — I — will not! Do you hear? I *will* not! I want you, but I *will* not!" She calls him a coward. "Yes, coward!" he repeated after her. "Yes, coward!" He is not yet clear about what is happening, but her furious words urge the truth forward in his mind. "A man! to hold what you have wanted for years in your arms, and afraid to — to take it — and if I were to suffer for it years of hell — I would still take it. — I would pay, but you —"

"I am afraid!" he said bluntly. "Not of hell and that you talk about. But I am afraid — of myself."

His words seemed contemptible to her; for 'her soul knew no fears; what she touched and saw, that only she knew.'^{*} But in a last sublime reply he reaches a foothold in that man's world he belongs to, that which is built up in the course of endless generations: The world of ideas, of laws, of morals, the world of the *unseen*.

"So it's best not! I see I *know*."

When he has left her, and by the hour roams about the city in all directions, it is with a jubilant feeling of having, by that act of will, attained the world he had sought. 'Something created! Something real! Something his own! Out of the shadows of things, out of the broken ideals, the wooden dummies with which he had labored so many years, a world seemed to be born, a new world that was true to the touch, where he could live and

^{*}Compare Bradley's Analysis of Lady Macbeth's character, in *Shakesperean Tragedy*.

work untormented by shadows. He felt the eternal conviction of will, undebatable and undemonstrable — *the will that creates the real from the unreal, the will that out of pain and labor gives peace.*

At last he has worked himself wholly free of Elsie. He has used up what she knew, and is hurrying on toward a deeper, more intense reality. The features that reality wears, when revealed to him in the hour of need, are those of Isabella Mather. Slowly and quietly she has taken possession of Jack's and the reader's mind. With fine art the author has known how to make us familiar with her, her about whom he says significantly: 'She possessed, in contradistinction to Elsie, character, in the usual sense of the term.' Not out of the usual in her nature, which is extraordinary only in its delicacy, she is the woman who follows him into the new reality — the real world.

These are the main lines in a book that excels both in profound and acute thought, and in convincing, fresh lifelikeness.

II

Between 'The Real World' and the following book, 'The Common Lot,' there is considerable difference in regard to structure. 'The Real World' gives an impression of Gothic architecture, striving upward in boldly aspiring lines. From the original foundation the superstructure rises in new orders that develop from each other, tapering ever higher, till they collect all in the spire that crowns the work. Gothic is also the profusion of interesting details that like openwork adorn the style, and give the whole the effect of richness.

'The Common Lot,' on the other hand, has a more plain, every-day aspect, with broad façades and evenly balanced wings. In none of his works is the author's talent more easily accessible than in this one.

'The Common Lot' resumes a thought that had arisen already in 'The Web of Life' and which is present also in 'The Real World': that the common type of man does not with impunity exceed his limitations. 'The Common Lot' is the force of gravity operating in the life of society — the common human conditions, with their responsibilities and duties that pluck back him who will exalt himself above its level.

The young architect Jackson Hart is disappointed in his expectations of inheriting his uncle's large fortune. The money is to be used for the erection of a great technical school. Instead of leading the rich, independent life he had hoped for, the treadmill of poorly paid daily labor is in store for him. When he, therefore, sees a chance of making considerable profit by

doing a piece of work of somewhat doubtful character for a speculator, he seizes it, and is subsequently drawn into ever larger undertakings, and further away from the right path. He is entrusted with the erection of the technical school that is to be built for his uncle's money, and here commits frauds to such an extent that they are discovered and come to his wife's knowledge. This causes her to come to a decision. She has observed him deviating more and more from what she considers to be right; and so she now asks him point-blank: 'Are you an honorable man?' and as he is not able to answer her in a straightforward manner she deserts him. Even now he is not ready to own that he has done wrong. The matter is hushed up, and he lives on as before, until a catastrophe opens his eyes. One of the buildings he has put up, in defiance of all building regulations, and with omission of all safety appliances, burns down, and he is witness to the loss of several lives. He is overcome, and goes to meet his wife, to subject himself to whatever she deems fit. And, according to her wish, he acknowledges his guilt before court. He was not equal to the game he had dared. He returns 'to the ranks.'

In this book it is the woman who has the surer and nobler conception of what is right. Among Herrick's women characters Helen is the most charming, the Puritan in her most attractive guise, more full-blooded than Helen Mather, in 'The Real World,' and more lovely and womanly than May, in 'The Memoirs of an American Citizen.'

At the transition from 'The Common Lot' to this his (for the present) last and most important book, one has the opportunity of seizing on, and pursuing, the lines that run through the whole of Herrick's production and that connect the single works to make up a larger rhythm of thought.

Out of the contrast indicated already in his first booklet, between two types of men, there are successively developed a whole row of characters and conflicts. Thornton becomes Dr. Sommers, and the young man we have seen in Jack Pemberton is met again as Clayton and Harrington. The one becomes the man who is endowed with an instinctive knowledge of his gifts, but not with genius. He seeks his place in the world. What he overcomes are those obstacles that rise between himself and his faculties. His development is both an outer and an inner one, and his victory of a double nature: Clearness about himself, and the winning of a woman whose nature is the completemnt and confirmation of his own. The other is the man who wins, the genius. He does not experience a development in the same sense as the other type. That is both acutely observed and true to nature. He encounters difficulties before he finds his proper atmosphere: Clayton before finding that on which he can concentrate his powers, Harrington, before escaping surroundings that are too narrow for him; but otherwise both belong

to the type that wins because certain of itself. Nature herself has equipped them so well that they may, indeed, strike ground like other craft, but not capsize. The rocks once passed, they will reach their destination, whatever wind may blow. Their existence is not confined or terminated by any woman; she is merely, in one way or another, his helpmate, as wife or as confidante.

'The Common Lot' is interesting as being the settlement between the two conflicting spheres, the counterproof, as it were. The evil effects of their mingling prove that the differences really exist. Jackson Hart belongs altogether to the same sphere as Jack Pemberton and Sommers, but nevertheless he ventures into difficult situations, where only men like Harrington can hold their own.

However instinctively Herrick's production has unfolded itself, one gets almost the impression of calculation when looking back over it from his last book. It is as if all that preceded were but preparatory to this last one. The circle is closed. We have returned to the theme of the man who wins, but with quite other presuppositions. The books lying between have been drawn upon for all their dearest experiences, their profoundest motives. The development has moved in a spiral line. We have returned to the same spot, and look upon the same scenery, but we have ascended to a greater height, and our view now embraces much larger horizon.

It must be of interest, just as in the case of an art so diversified and rich as that of Herrick appears to be, at first or second sight, with yet one more glance to discern the few and great lines that at the very bottom underlie the whole. One is thereby led to think of the grand simplicity that is nature's secret.

'The Memoirs of an American Citizen' is for the present the masterpiece in Herrick's production — a masterpiece, because it in all respects — both as a work of imagination and of thought, and as a description of the society it belongs to, marks the highest point to which his art, according to its peculiarity, may rise.

The American citizen relates his experiences dryly and clearly, one after another, like columns in a ledger, and all balanced up at the end. By reason of the method of narration which, without recourse to sentimentality or reflection produces the whole effect by the facts themselves, their sequence, and their grouping, one is tempted to draw another comparison. The memoirs are a modern 'saga' written, it may be, without any acquaintance with the Icelandic sagas, but as a saga would have to start into existence nowadays and about modern men.

In short chapters we are told about the hero's progress, his litigations,

his piling up of riches. We see him as the restive boy who cannot find elbow room in the small conditions of his native town. We trace him from his first unlucky beginning in Chicago, watch him gain a footing, experience his first success; thereupon his struggles, his ever-widening plans, the dangers he is exposed to, at last the results: his wealth, his power, his senatorial dignity, and his — loneliness; because in the outer we read the inner soul, character and intellectual powers, conflicts and development.

We beheld his nature revealing itself, and asserting itself, until it stands before us distinct, in strong and bold outlines.

Most novels are, from the very beginning, written on basis of what the reader learns only on the last page, and not even always there. The author is thus able to analyze, emphasize, shade off, because he knows what the end is going to be. Herrick does not permit himself thus to anticipate the natural course of development. At every point of the presentation both Van Harrington and the reader know exactly what actually happened, and what may be concluded from the facts — and no more.

Our acquaintance with Van Harrington begins, as it would have begun, had we met him personally, with some few strongly marked characteristics: An ungovernable love of independence, no very great scrupulousness as to means to an end, decided and cold-blooded financial talent. If we had parted from him after this first acquaintanceship, we would have carried away some distinct and seemingly adequate impressions; but, in reality, would be prejudiced in many regards.

With every new page we read a prejudice is removed. A meeting, an experience, a conversation, broadens or changes our conception of him. And when we finally part from him, his character stands out in full clearness, and we are rid of all prejudices.

But let us trace in detail how Herrick obtains this result. It strikes us, right at the beginning, how innocent Harrington appears in face of the false suspicion of theft to which he is exposed, immediately after his arrival on Chicago, how unreasonable it *does* appear, and how reasonable it *would* seem to be, in regard to the wild and rather reckless boy who, in his home town, had plundered the judge's orchard, in order to revenge himself upon him. This is right away one of the significant, light pushes, as it were, that guide our conception of him on to the right track. The regardless daring that characterizes him in business affairs, and which easily might degenerate into dull, unattractive brutality, is only the dead coloring underlying a number of gentle traits that gradually broaden and ennoble the figure. The mere trait of his hatred toward Straus, causing him, in spite of pecuniary gain, to consult his sympathies and antipathies, is significant; but chiefly does he grow

in our eyes by his human qualities not denying themselves when the object is other than money and power. They reveal themselves as moral courage during the anarchist trial, as personal courage in physical danger, when the anarchist attempts to kill him, and intrepidity in the face of heated public opinion, when at the caucus he takes the floor in order to repute lying accusations. But most beautifully do they shine forth in his enthusiasm and public-spiritedness during the war. Through this unselfish living in all great and strong, we get an impression of his spiritual kinship with it.

But he is not only a sympathetic character built along great lines. Herrick has known how to endow him both with tender feeling and a large mind — even more than that, with genius. He is capable of loving deeply and constantly, he is a stanch friend, a kind and considerate husband; he possesses not only the courage to shape his own fate, but, what is rarer, a mind strong enough to grasp it in all its bearings, and, at the same time, the profound insight into life that gives him the confidence in his ability to bring that his fate to a consummation, such as he sees it written.

Most clearly and richly his character reveals itself in his relations with the four women to whom he is drawn successively, and who exert influence over him. As a boy he recoils at May's unshakable puritanism. This little woman, whose soul is like a fortified castle, incites him and repels him. He loves her obstinate, well-principled, heroic narrow-mindedness, and even then when, as a man, he understands that to be a world foreign and unattainable to him, he is forced to fond admiration of her. She is a great power, as he himself, and worth having on one's side. Their estrangement from the first moment, when she disapproves of his taking the law into his own hands, down to the very last, when he in vain begs her to let him help her, is the tragical chord fundamental in his life.

The next woman he meets, Hillary Cox, the clever cashier who procures him his first position, represents the plain, colorless, commonplace circumstances that attract. But a moment, and he dismisses the thought: 'He travels fastest who travels alone.' He is the man who intends to win, and she is the woman who would be of hindrance to him.

Only after the hard initial struggles are over does he consider himself able to guide the fate also of another being. His marriage is his first triumph. He meets again the young woman who, immediately after his arrival in Chicago, had caused him to be arrested on suspicion of theft. Now he is not any longer exposed to similar mistakes, but can consider himself the equal of that upper class she proceeds from. The author has known how to give this marriage the character, at the same time inconspicuous and highly significant, that makes it typical for thousands of the kind. His wife is

absolutely nothing else to him than the woman he loves. She is one among life's necessities. His heart stands in need of her, he loves her and begets children with her — that is her story.

But not also his. His fate embraces plans, longings, crises of which she knows nothing. He comes to understand that there are two kinds of love in a man's life: 'the love for the woman and her children who are his to protect; and the hunger love at the bottom of the heart which with most is never satisfied, and maybe never can be satisfied in this life.' He experiences the lonely moments in which 'a man gropes to find what there is not even in the heart of the woman he loves.'

Twice has his heart chosen, and he has remained equally uncomprehended and lonely. But then he finds all he seeks, comprehension, confidence, help, and that in a woman who is another's wife. Not that, however, is the real obstacle. That is merely the superficial coincidence symbolizing the real fact — that the very deepest love *cannot* be satisfied. It must forever remain the 'hunger-love' which is its very nature; and the tragedy consists in their being able to preserve the beauty of that love as the miracle of their lives only by respecting its inner laws, and resigning themselves.

In the midst of a rough, matter-of-fact description of reality Herrick has, in the relations of Harrington to Mrs. Dround, created a strain of lofty poetry — in fact has done so by fusing both elements in a most natural manner. The spirituality pervading reality in Herrick's conception of the world is rarified here to a still greater degree. Just as one must suppose a lighter medium for light, through which it may pass — ether — likewise these beings seem to possess a lighter, more powerful, and ethereal 'something' in which they meet and intercommunicate their natures — 'a something' for which we have no other name than genius.

She is his 'speaking-friend,' as the Edda calls it. For her he can unfold his plans. She understands them and believes in them.

It is she who at the first moment divines him. She overlooks his personal characteristics, she perceives *what tasks he is equal to*. She is his valkyria who fires him to battle and weds him to his fate. Often she is far away, only few are the meetings we are told about, and never do they belong to each other; and still they seem ever very near each other — living a common life through time and space, by help of their genius. The world in which they live is spirit and created by spirit, — by her strong, conscious choice: 'I will not — no, for *his* sake.'

Like a sad and dulcet song of fate her words sound in that moment when they are closest to each other, soul against soul:

"Listen," she whispered — "We shall never need more than this.

For I should be a hindrance, then, not a help. And that would be the end of me, indeed. *You* have your will to work which is more than any woman could give you. And I have the thought of you. Now I must go away again — we have to live that way. It makes no difference: *You and I think the same thought in the same way.* What separation does a little distance put between you and me? I shall follow after you step by step, and when you have mounted to the broad level that comes after accomplishment you will be glad it has been as I say, not different. It is I that must long. For you need no woman to comfort and love you! ”

His mind is filled with her greatness, and he speaks the significant words: “ She was looking deeper into fate than I could look. For she was wiser as a woman than I was as a man.” One seems, in that moment, to see her lifted even higher above the circumstances in which both lead their existence. She has made her way to that which renders men divine,— her nature is pervaded by it. She seems to us, as she does to him, the norn who spins the thread of his life.

She takes the measure of his nature at its highest, she reveals him by showing his kinship to the values that are most independent of and foreign to all surface seeming.

In this very deepening lies Herrick’s idealization of the character, that which renders it more unreal than, e.g. Carmichael, in relation to what is evident for the moment, but which at the same time makes it all the more a vivid and typical expression of the forces and ideas animating the battling century of individualism, of technical skill, of industry.

Just as Herrick has succeeded in conveying to us the impression of genius, he is able, without forcing, to extend our horizon from the first sharply outlined portrait of the daring, resourceful man of affairs to wider views — first of the busy, money-worshipping race of men wholly engrossed in material questions, to whom he belongs, and the remarkable society which most fully represents it, and furthermore of the ethical convictions, or rather the ethical attitude, peculiar to that race; and finally of the whole century which in the history of human development is marked by the greatest, *heroically* daring, material progress humanity has been witness to.

As is the case with every penetrating comprehension, Herrick’s interpretation of that type becomes at once an accusation, a condemnation, and — a defence of it, the very best thinkable. And such it becomes, not after we know all, but simultaneously, by means of an account so complete and so natural that it conveys all. We are shown a whole selection of living, ethical forms which we may compare with each other, preferring whichever we please.

By the side of May's excessively sensitive notions of honor, Harrington does indeed appear rather conscienceless, and in comparison to Farson's rock-firm principles he stands before us in the doubtful light of an adventurer; but compared with Mr. Dround — honorableness that is rather weak in the knees — his conception of what is right has the advantage of being virile, compared with Mr. Hartmann's religious fanaticism and weakness of character it is tolerant and magnanimous,—it is refined when placed side by side with Carmichael's robust cupidity; and as compared to his wife's, his brother's, even his friend Slocum's hesitations and misgivings, it towers above them like a giant among midgets, because there is one quality common to him, as to the best, such as May and Farson in contrast to the smaller characters, and that *being thoroughly of one piece*. At any rate, he is not a deviation from a system, an aberration, a mistake, but himself represents a *whole* and *complete* manner of conceiving and reacting upon the outer universe.

He obeys an inner necessity, and whether now that be right or wrong, it leads him farther and farther out into loneliness. His course leads him past a number of cross-roads, and at each he is deserted by a friend, or something dear to him. May, Farson, his brother, part company with him, and his own wife's approval follows them. Love and friendship seem both about to leave him. Only two, Jane (Mrs. Dround) and Slocum, stand by him, but also with him there comes the hour of settlement, when the surface opens up and the fast becomes flowing.

Ought he not to have seized happiness in this woman? That is the uncertainty awakening in him, and her answer, or rather, *their* answer, to themselves: 'Don't regret — anything,' she whispered, 'we have had so much!' seems only to prolong the quivering of his doubts.

Still faster grows the breach between him and his best friend, at the moment when the victory is won, when he thinks of rewarding him who has aided him so steadfastly. He finds that he no longer possesses anything that is of value to the other. The only thing Slocum cared for — to obtain a seat in the county's incorruptible supreme court, he has forfeited all chances of, for Harrington's sake. Now departs the glamor from the triumph of victory, still one more remnant of illusions topples to the ground. And loneliness reaches his heart. But he continues his course — a trifle more heavy-hearted, but unbroken, and without a thought of favorings. Thus he walks out of the book, without a flourish, as if the last page was a street corner that concealed him from our eyes. To us he still seems to stride on, stayed but by death.

This conclusion, opening up to our imagination even greater and more

immeasurable distances, reminds one of the never to be forgotten final scene in Mirbeau's play, '*Les affaires sont les affaires*.' This drama is, like Herrick's book, a monograph about the hero of our times, the captain of commerce. As it appeared one year before Herrick's book, and rapidly wandered the world over, it is not impossible that he was influenced by it, but yet not very probable. On the other hand, one might call attention to the characteristic scene in which L  chet lets the light from the electrical reflectors fall upon his portrait, an idea which we find anticipated already in '*The Web of Life*.' More probably, the same field of observation has furnished both authors with similar details, and has caused similar feelings to arise in them.

Mirbeau's drama is the only contemporaneous piece of fiction which it can be of avail to compare Herrick's book with. It is only by such a comparison that one discovers the most individual features in his work — that in which it, in the truest sense of the word, is new.

As an artist, Mirbeau is essentially different from Herrick by having an eye most especially for the characteristic. Only by the force with which he has observed and retained the characteristic in his figures does he attain to the typical.

In correct, ever convincing, but glaring lines, Mirbeau brings into strong relief Isidore L  chet's unceasing activity, his coarseness, his vanity. '*(Vive Isidore L  chet! — Deux-deux moutons*'', — the scene with the overseer.) But Mirbeau has, at the same time, with extraordinary distinctness seen and rendered prominent the blind, but not groping, vitality that is the dominant note in L  chet's make-up, by force of which he works and succeeds without recognizing bars or bounds. The outlines are drawn so sharply that the figure seems exaggerated and yet a likeness, like a caricature, and angular like a sketch by Forain; but there are also moments when that figure assumes force and power, when it becomes monumental, like one of Rodia's sculptures, with all the outstanding corners of individuality. L  chet is the representative of a new and strong order of things over against one old and weak. One discerns in his nature that noble vein of supreme justice which gives value to his existence. The impressions we gain of his character gradually collect in a feeling of the restless energy with which he lives and moves about. He becomes an elemental power in human shape.

At last — in that moment when he, with downright physical effort, shakes his weakness off, and turns away from his son's corpse, in order to bury his fangs in the wretches that intended to take advantage of his grief, that impression becomes immensely heightened. One hears the roar of life's eternal, whirling loom. His sorrow — of what influence was it? It was like a pebble which one casts into a mighty engine. A vibration, a jarring, a moment's halt, and on the wheel turns.

The difference lies deeper, however, than in the merely artistic. Great ado is made about L  chet, but not about Harrington; on the contrary, he seems quite plain and common. The author is greatly impressed by L  chet, just as we are. He seems to have come upon him from a point that lies below or outside of the great one's course. Herrick has started from the same point as his hero, and follows alongside with him, quietly observing without losing his breath, or having to strain his muscles.

The same type has been seen from two different points of view. But these represent not merely personal peculiarities, but are umbilical cords that lead back to widely different societies. L  chet belongs to the Old World, Harrington to the New. The first finds below him the conditions and ways of thinking of socialism, as hostile as possible to him, and above him, an aristocrat, as representative of old culture. In a society where all belong to one stratum or another, to one company or another, for social or historic reasons, the individual who, without large cause, without a past, without ancestry, crosses right through all boundaries, easily comes to have the appearance of an 'outlaw,' that is, of one who is beyond society's usual laws. Somehow, he resembles the type of the criminal rather than the type of the hero.

Harrington, on the other hand, has been and is found in a society of individualists. The difference between him and the others comes much closer, being only a difference of moral degree. The conflict, on that account, assumes the nature of the purely human and tragical. He is the legitimate son of that society whose laws he breaks without hesitation. He raises himself above it, and yet fuses with it in his origin. *To him it meets itself, its own spirit, its own tendencies.* It is therefore that the description of Harrington seems to give the impression of being the essential formula of American society itself, clarified and elucidated.

May compares him with Napoleon — a hint which we do well to follow. It is a type that has emigrated, and it is of interest to watch it develop under new conditions. The Napoleonic type, romantic in Europe, has here become classic, with that tinge of drab and the commonplace, down to banality, that rightfully belongs to classicism — a classic being, at bottom, but a perfectly commonplace story.

The unfinished, the chaotic, the barbaric, in American society as a rule overshadows for the European visitor all else to such an extent that he is not able to perceive (what so vividly strikes the more distant observer) that America, in contrast to Europe, is a classic society in which racial characteristics, social conditions, and political forms correspond to one another like mighty analogues. This sounds astounding at first, but yet is easily demonstrable.

The main factors which determine the character of a society have, in the case of the United States, been unusually strong and continuously operative. 'The English in America were, when they began their march, one people, though divided into a number of autonomous communities; and to a people already advanced in civilization, the country was one country, as if destined by nature to retain one and undivided whatever nation might occupy it.* The energetic, independent English-speaking nation that was introduced into this immense country with its inexhaustible resources was bound to adjust itself at once to the task it was called upon to perform; because that demanded exactly those powers and fostered exactly those talents which it already possessed. An energy such as theirs was needed, in order to clear up the land, to fight, and to build; and that energy quickly developed into resourceful initiative. Piety and self-confidence, such as they possessed, was required to resist the many dangers. And while thus the center of personality was being shifted more and more in the direction of the will-life, they could not have found a freer field, an easier and more grateful opportunity for that self-willed personality to develop in. They soon became the people for that country, just because that country from the very beginning had been a country that needed people such as they were. The power of being able to assimilate the new and heterogeneous elements which the young nation has shown itself to be in the possession of and which one has admired so much, undoubtedly finds its explanation in the fact that the qualities which the conditions craved so persistently and forcibly of the newly arrived — initiative, tenacity, and self-help — at once brought them into accord with the predominant national characteristics, whereafter the rest — the secondary qualities — readily followed suit.

Thus the mighty, and as it seems, so far steadily operating, conditions that demand self-help and retard self-help have produced the most individualistic nation the world has ever seen.

To these national characteristics a consistently worked out democracy corresponds as their closely fitting political form. The large whole is subdivided into smaller and smaller parts. First the states, within these the counties, within these again the commercial and political election districts, and furthest down the single citizen. The electoral rights in Europe only partly granted are here carried through down to their last consequences. The people elect not only their representatives, but also their candidates to the diverse, and by no means few, offices to be filled. Throughout the whole country the two powerful parties stretch their organizations, like to a system of blood-vessels, intended to suck up and carry strength to every single cell in the huge body politic.

*Bryce, in 'The American Commonwealth.'

Hence Bryce could characterize the commowwealth as a society that is divided into longitudinal sections — from the (for the present) humblest to the most exalted in the same profession — rather than into transverse sections. The nation is not an aggregate of classes. They exist within it, but they do not make it. You are not struck by their political significance as you would be in any European country. The people is one people, although it occupies a wider territory than any other nation, and is composed of elements from many quarters.

But a society where the economic, social, and political tendencies all have the same main trend, and which *so far* is the uniform product of the steady operation of the same great powers, one has good reason for calling classic. A citizen in such a society will, generally speaking, be in accord with himself by accommodating himself to the conditions such as prevail. The society fits him, and he it. How long this harmony will last, that is another question.

Already now it seems to have become disturbed. Social and cultural problems are becoming urgent for whose solution other qualities and forces are necessary than those that so far have helped out. Discord and complications will arise at that moment when competition is no longer 'free,' i. e. when robust energy is no longer readily and rapidly rewarded, so that *conditions* require from the newly arrived and the rising generation humility, resignation, and the like — qualities radically different from those which *society*, from its traditional views as to what is proper, expects of them. That is already the case, and will become so in increasing proportion. It is, therefore, to be expected that Socialism which, so far, has not been able to gain a foothold, because it did not find support in the natural conditions, will rapidly become a factor of importance.*

In contrast to America, such as it has developed up to the present, Europe is, first of all, a society divided into transverse sections, a society of classes. For all that it might, indeed, still be a homogeneous society, as in the feudal ages, with public institutions, social strata, and ways of feeling corresponding to each other. But this harmony was disturbed long ago.†

*Compare Werner Lombart, 'Warum giebt es in den Vereinigten Staten keine Sozialismus?' (1906.)

†This incognity with its own self in popular consciousness is reason enough for Europe no longer having any national festivals. The old ones disappear, and it does not seem possible to originate new ones. The political festivals which the free constitutions brought along with them have the appearance of being *arbitrarily* made up of theoretic and quite cut and dried political division meetings, with some amusements added; but so that the festival note by no means seems to originate in, or be connected with, the occasion of thus assembling. As a rule it is brought about by alcohol. A totally different impression one gets when reading about the peculiar festivals which Americans know how to get up on political occasions. Compare, for

Shiftings and revolutions have been at work, so that views, customs, public institutions of different classes and periods are wedged in among each other in wild disorder. It is a capitalistic society, but replete with anti-capitalistic ideas; it is a democracy, but one in which there exist all sorts of barriers and privileges. It contains all types prominent in the development of the world, but none of them in that free expansion which is the consequence of the whole society being intent on its elaboration.

But in another society than one's own, a type may easily acquire the character of the strange, of the rare, or perhaps only of the individual. We must turn our eyes upward or sideward, in order to see it. Only in one's own society does the type lie right in the field of vision, and is there comprehended with the natural understanding that owes its origin to that type being only what we all are. A 'gentleman' may be fully comprehended and represented only in a society like the English, where all, down to the laborer, profess a 'gentlemanlike' ideal; a 'knight' only in a period and a society which is replete with 'knightly' conceptions, and a Napoleonic nature only where all are of a Napoleonic turn. But that is just what Europe was not during the past century. That is why Napoleon has been admired, deified, written down, denounced, why he has been to some a problem, to others a criminal or a superman; but it has shown itself to be impossible to receive him into our consciousness simply as fellowbeing, as citizen.

The common denominator of all conceptions of him is, indeed, the impression: *exception*. If one inquires closer, wherein the exceptional lies, one finds that it is not the tendency of his nature — individual self-determination — that is incomprehensible to our times. On the contrary, exactly therein does he belong to it. It is exactly because he and our times resemble each other exceedingly that he is ever able thus to disquiet our minds. The exceptional lies, rather in the form in which his nature revealed itself — the warlike, and in the intensity and irresistibility with which it overrode all, in a society where so many other individuals and so many other interests lay ready to unfold.

Warfare was his element. This alone was sufficient to render him ill-timed and out of harmony exactly with that spirit which was to grow out of and draw nourishment from his very victories. Already Leibniz had occupied himself with the idea of universal peace, and among Napoleon's

example, Whitlock's description in the Thirteenth District) of the victorious candidate's return to his native city, and the welcome there given him; or Bryce's description of the election-day parades, or of the great National Assemblies by which the presidents are nominated. One imagines reading about some mediæval church festival. There is the same appearance of naïve good-natured faith, in high and low. One feels, in both cases, that great, deeply grounded conditions are creating their natural expression.

contemporaries it had spokesmen, such as Kant, Bentham, and Saint-Simon. In the same year he leaves Europe, the first congress of peace assembles in America. War was no longer to be the expression of the times, even if it continued to remain a necessity. And what other equally favorable possibility of incarnation for the unrestrained unfolding of the will was there besides? There have been financiers, but never a public opinion which preponderatingly approved and admired them; there have been statesmen, but at the same time constitutional assemblies, as expression for a non-individualistic conception of the administration of public affairs. For that reason superman propensities have set in and become a lust of power in the imagination (Niebzsche).

We are told about the Boer War* that it was drawn out so long because the English generals in fear of public opinion hesitated to risk the loss of lives which a decisive battle would entail. Such considerations do not check the fighting ability of money, or, at any rate, have not yet done so, in the free states of America.† With money as weapon, and with money as spoils, the will can manifest itself with a brutality surpassing anything possible on any battlefield. The victims that fall in the fight are rarely counted. Money works secretly and at long range. A man who understands how to marshal the dollars — mercenaries without a party — a condottiere of finance, as Herrick calls him, may go to the uttermost limits, and beyond. His nature may become Napoleonic.

The difficulties of that type arose not only from the fact that it appeared in a form that was destined quickly to arouse mixed feelings, but also for the reason that it was twin-brother to one yet mightier. From the Revolution derived also the socialistic trains of thought which lead a warding-off effect on would-be Napoleons, especially by putting a limit to the patience of the masses with such a figure. Also in this respect America was a more favorable ground.

Napoleon is born of and lives in the anarchistic interregnum when the old order of society‡ has been overthrown, and before the new order has been created or the old one repaired. Even if he had won the Russian Expedition,

*The Times 'History of the Boer War.'

†The New York Evening Post computes the number of killed on the American railroads, in the year 1898-1900, to be 21,847, or the same number as during the same period fell on the British side, including those that died in the hospitals.

‡The old condition of society would, strictly speaking, neither have been able to produce the type; for he who mounted upward through society's various strata, at every stage of his progress arrayed himself, bodily and mentally, in the entire condign to that shape, and was thus placed out of comparison with his earlier condition. He was surrounded by the atmosphere corresponding to his position; and, highest up, the scale of comparison had, practically, disappeared, and therewith also the possibility of the superman arising.

or later the battle of Waterloo, it would only have been a postponement of his fate. Whether in the form of national enthusiasm in the several nations, or that of social movements, the tendency toward combination of the single elements would, sooner or later, have thrust him off, and made impossible his rule — which presupposed a movability of the single atoms of society, and a uniformity of conditions such as Europe has shown but during periods of disintegration.

He revealed the new century to itself by carrying to an extreme one of the traits in its character. He may justly be called the genuine child of the Revolution; for not only did his career become possible only through the disintegration into atoms which the Revolution had entailed, but the rebellion of the individual against all laws of society that was its dynamic force reached in him its opposite extreme, despotism.

Thus it came about that he stood there so inexplicable and alone, encysted as a curiosity within the development of modern Europe. The times closed around about him.

He is a Yankee on the wrong side of the Atlantic, and one with the wrong weapons. Note well that, notwithstanding all his dignities, his contemporaries always remembered him as the Little Corsican. He became emperor, but he never came to be 'the anointed.' He was and remained an ordinary man who had had a marvelous career. Thus the millionaire continues to be the errand-boy who has made his way up.

But he became extraordinary because he could not be repeated.

On the other side of the ocean, however, the type found all that was denied it in Europe: a popular opinion willing to grant every one as much as he can take, and room and resources enough to favor during a hundred years the free and undisturbed growth of this individualism. Over there, the type appeared anew, not within a limited circle, but with the whole society; and the ethical conflicts between the individual and society could thus become evident with entire distinctness.

It is extremely significant for Herrick's conception of the true source of reality that one finally arrives at something psychical — a point of view, the relation between observer and object, as the 'most American,' that quality which it is least possible to alienate or imitate. We share the same fate when we wish to enter into his art and his thought.

As an artist he has all the resources of talent, and in rich measure.

Even to a stranger his style is remarkable for clearness and euphony. Without taking recourse to adjectival stimulants, he is able to make the matter itself provide its atmosphere in the telling. There is both warmth and sweetness in his presentation. Again and again his thoughts voice themselves quietly in felicitous expressions. There are not a few remarks in his books that are cleancut and beautiful, like coins. He possesses considerable esprit, and feeling to an extraordinary degree; only humor seems to be denied him. But his earnestness is not oppressive; he is too free and unaffected for that, too well balanced, and too clearly conscious of the many-sidedness of things.

His interpretation of human nature is always discriminating, generally striking, frequently distinguished by a penetrating knowledge of the soul. In his description of men the fundamental characteristic of his nature — its tendency of considering all under the aspects of the inner life — becomes apparent in too closely related faculties: his ability to depict character and his ability to trace that fine distinction that exists between masculine and feminine nature — that distinction which most of his contemporaries have such difficulty in perceiving, because they all too often only take the first step beneath the surface, to nerve reactions, sensations, and moods where it does not yet come out with sufficient clearness.

Their obtuseness has resulted in a certain indistinctness, a flowing together, in the depiction of the sexes — a tendency toward general feminization one might call it, if the truly feminine had not also suffered under it. In contrast to this effete and — notwithstanding all eroticism — sexless fusion, Herrick's conception of the sexes is gratefully clear and discriminating, in the same manner as in Shakespeare's and Balzac's. His men are men, and his women women, because his insight reaches down into the depths of spirit and character where the difference between the sexes cannot be obliterated.

Even if a man and a woman stand in exactly parallel positions and act in like manner, yet their actions are of wholly different character. Compare, for example, Jack in 'The Real World' with Helen in 'The Common Lot.' About his deepest motive he uses the expression: 'I know' — a product of the imagination and reflection; whereas in her case feelings and tangible experiences play the chief roll. And observe how well Herrick understands to depict feminine weakness in Mrs. Wilbur who is tormented by masculine insatiability and longing for independence; or in Mrs. Dround who, though in possession of so much masculine energy and boldness, yet feels the need of admiration and self-sacrificing devotion.

It is for this reason that his gallery of women has become so various and

J. M. SYNGE AND THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD

BY LOUIS UNTERMAYER

UNDER the fanfare of the wrangling schools, a new voice is making itself heard, and strange, peasant-like harmonies announce the advent of another figure. It is to simple but exotic strains — to the melodies of rustic flute and weather-beaten strings that the spirit of J. M. Synge is disclosed — the spirit of bogs and peatmarshes, the spirit of unfettered poetry. Wild poetry itself is in his utterance, for although Mr. Synge writes entirely in prose, his sentences are so steeped in similes of the skies that his very commonplaces are filled and colored with all the *nuances* of rhythm. The sunlight filters through his lines and the spell of scenic splendor is over all his work. This very poetic quality is at one time the most obvious and most indefinable characteristic of the four prose plays with which Mr. Synge has declared himself. Nor is dramatic power lacking; as the following passage between the two disillusioned beggarfolk (the man and wife in 'the Well of the Saints') testifies:

Mary Daul.— I wouldn't rear a crumpled whelp the like of you. It's many a woman is married with finer than yourself should be praising God if she's no child, and isn't loading the earth with things would make the heavens lonesome above, and they scaring the larks and the crows and the angels passing in the sky.

Martin Doul.— Go on now to be seeking a lonesome place where the earth can hide you away; go on now, I'm saying, or you'll be having men and women with their knees bled, and they screaming to God for a holy water would darken their sight, for there's no man but would liefer be blind a hundred years, or a thousand itself, than to be looking on your like.

Even in this scrap, torn from its context, there is the natural burst of speech that is almost lyric. William Butler Yeats has pointed out that 'it blurs definition, clear edges, everything that comes from the will; it turns imagination from all that is of the present, like a gold background in a religious picture. . . . Perhaps no Irishman had ever that exact rhythm in his voice, but certainly if Mr. Synge had been born a countryman, he would

have spoken like that. It makes the people of his imagination a trifle disembodied; it gives them a kind of innocence even in their anger and their cursing.

In 'The Playboy of the Western World' (his latest drama, published by Maunsell & Co., Dublin), he himself explains this absence of prosiness in a remarkably spirited preface (the Shavian worshippers notwithstanding). In this he acknowledges his debt to the fishermen and ballad-singers, the beggar women and peat gatherers; from Kerry to Mayo or near Dublin he borrows the phrases from the folk imagination of these people. 'Any one who has lived in real intimacy with the Irish peasantry will know that the wildest sayings and ideas in this play are tame, indeed, compared with the fancies one may hear in any little hillside cabin in Geesala or Carraroe or Dingle Bay. All art is a collaboration; and there is little doubt that in the happy ages of literature, striking and beautiful phrases were as ready to the storyteller's hand as the rich cloaks and dresses of his time [or the playwright's].' And so Mr. Synge goes on to tell how, when he was writing 'The Shadow of the Glen' (a tremendous little one-act play), he got more aid than any learning could have given him from 'a chink in the floor of the old Wicklow house where I was staying, that let me hear what was being said by the servant girls in the kitchen.' The keynote of the preface, however, may be found in the next to last sentence where he maintains — 'In a good play every speech should be as fully flavored as a nut or apple, and such speeches cannot be written by any one who works among people who have shut their lips on poetry.' 'Give up Paris; you will never create anything by reading Racine,' Yeats told him. 'Go to the Arran Islands. Live there as if you were one of the people themselves; express a life that has never found expression.'

All of which has borne fruit in this play itself, which, though it may lack the delicate suggestion and the haunting minor cadences of his 'Riders to the Sea,'* contains fresher and more virile writing than anything the prophets of the 'Celtic revival' have produced. The characters move naturally and seemingly of their own warm will,—they are peasants of to-day who live with hot words on their lips and hot blood in their hearts — peasants who believe in the beauty of the actual and who concern themselves little with esoteric symbolism, or the fates of Deirdre and Naois.

Christy Mahon, a young Irish Peer Gynt, but with more dreams and less fire than the Norwegian ne'er do well, confesses to the murder of his father and thereby gains the respect of the community in general, and the girl Pegeen in particular. This, and the subsequent chorus of admiration from the countryfolk, furnishes the first shock to the unprepared reader —

*In Poet Lore, Spring number, 1895.

